THE PARABLE OF THE Great Supper OPENED.

Wherein is set forth the fulness of Gospel-provision. The frank and free invitation of *Jews* and *Gentiles* to this Supper: the poor excuses of the Recusant Guests that were invited. The faithful Returns which the Messengers make unto the Lord of their refusal. God's displeasure against those who slight his Favours: his bringing in of despicable Creatures to fill his House: with the Condemnation of those that were bidden.

Methodically and succinctly handled by that Judicious Divine, Mr. *John Crump*, late of *Maidstone* in *Kent*.

London, Printed for *Tho. Parkhurst*, at the *Golden Bible* on *London-Bridge*, 1669.

32

Luke. 14. 16. Serm. L

Then said he unto him, a certain man made a great
supper &c Gadmany. p. L.

Ibidem. Luke. 14. 16. Serm. 2 p. 23

Ibidem Luke. 14. 16. Serm. 3. p. 95

Luke. 14. 17 Serm. 4. p. 64.

& sent his servants at supper time to say to y^m y^t were bidden
come, for all things are now ready.

Ibidem. Luke. 14. 17. Serm. 5. p. 83

Luke. 14. 18. Serm. 6. p. 115

& they all with one consent began to make excuse &c.

Ibidem Luke. 14. 18 Serm. 7. p. 133

Luke. 14. 18. Serm. 8 p. 155

& first said unto him I have bought a piece of ground &c.

Luke. 14. 19 Serm. 9. p. 181

another said I have bought 5 yoke of oxen & I go to prove y^m
pray thee have me excused

Luke. 14. 20. Serm. 10. p. 202

another said I have married a wife & therefore I cannot come

Luke. 14. 21 Serm. 11. p. 221

& servant came & shewed his Lord these things &c.

Luke. 14. 21 Serm. 12 p. 239.

then ye master of ye house being angry &c.

Luke. 14. 21. Serm. 13. p. 270.

bring in hither ye poor & ye maimed, ye halt & ye blind

Luke. 14. 22. Serm. 14. p. 287

& servant said Lord it is done as thou hath commanded &c.

Luke. 14. 23. Serm. 15 p. 307. & 326

& Lord said unto ye servant go out into ye highways & hedges

Luke. 14. 23. Serm. 16. p. 326.

compel y^m to come in &c.

Luke. 14. 24. Serm. 17. p. 343.

for I say unto you y^t none of those men which were bidden
shall taste of my supper.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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BRITISH MUSEUM

To the Right Worshipful,

Sir *JOHN BANKS* of *Ailesford* in the County of *Kent* Baronet, and to the Vertuous Lady his Wife; and to *LAMBARD GODFREY*, Esq;

IF we may judge of the Excellency of things by their usefulness, we must confess, that Parables are very excellent, since they are of such use. Although the things mentioned in the Parables that were delivered by our Saviour and others in Scripture, were never acted according to the Letter, yet something like those very things was acted by those very persons to whom the Parables were spoken, which had it been spoken in plain down-right language, won'd not have instructed them half so well: for Parables are such clear Glasses, as (being held up to men) do represent both them and their actions in a most lively manner, and that so fully, as that they are forced to pass sentence upon themselves by their own judg-

ment and conscience, which otherwise could never be so convincingly done. I say, to pass judgment against themselves, even as David *did upon* Nathan's *Parable against him; and the* Jews *did upon our Saviour's Parable against them*, Mat. 21. 41.

Per terrestria intelligit Christus doctrinam lactiu, sive similitudines illas rusticas & terrestres quibus uti solebat. Marlorat.

It is lawful to use Parables, when a man is able so to frame them, that the true scope may both appear and instruct; and the words be so chosen and placed, as an understanding ear may discern them to be a Parable, not a story.

A Parable (*saith* Peter Martyr) *is nothing else but* a similitude, or example to illustrate the matter in hand. *Parables do familiarly explain divine truths, representing heavenly matters under earthly resemblances.* If I have told you earthly things *saith our Saviour*, John 3. 12. *that is earthly resemblances, or similitudes, representing those heavenly truths, which all believers ought to know and practice while they are upon the earth. Parables in Scripture do hold forth the same truth under divers similitudes. In one Chapter*, viz. Matth. 13. *We see how many Parables Christ makes use of to set out the king-*

dom

dom of heaven by. It is said ver. 3. *he spake many things to them in Parables, saying,* A sower went forth to sow. *And* ver. 24. *Another Parable put he forth unto them, saying,* the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field. *And* ver. 33. *Another Parable spake he unto them, saying,* The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of Mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: *divers other Parables of like nature ye have in the same Chapter. So that as some speak of the* Jews *Manna, it was turned into all manner of savoury tests, according to the several palats of them that eat it, so there is that in heavenly Doctrine, which suiteth with all true desires of happiness.*

Moreover in Parables, similitudes are fetcht from the several and usual employments of all sorts, to illustrate that Doctrine of the Gospel, which belongeth to all sorts. This every one should heedfully mind; how Christ speaks to them in the language of their own Trades and Callings: here each person in his own Trade and Occupation may learn something for his Salvation. Here the plough-man may meditate on the Parable of the sower, when he is ploughing up his ground, and turning up the furrows of the earth; which may put him in mind of plowing up the fallow-ground

of his heart: and when he is breaking up the clods of the earth, he may remember, that Gods calls for a broken and contrite heart: and when he put his hand to the plough, this shew him the constancy of an holy profession. No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God, *Luke 9. 61. hereby a man may learn what pains to take with his own heart; so preparing it for the true seed, the word of life: and when he casteth in the seed in the season, he may understand his own season: and as that which a man soweth, is not quickned, unless it die, so he may learn that the body of man after it dieth, and rotteth in the earth, shall rise again: and he that seeth not so much in the sowing and reaping his grain, is a fool in the Apostles sense,* 1 Cor. 15. 36. *his plowing up the ground may also shew him the grievousness of afflictions, how the wicked plow upon the backs of the Righteous, and make long their furrows. He that thus meditates at the plough, shall alwayes have a Sermon before him, every furrow being a line or sentence; and every grain of Corn that he soweth, a Lesson whence he may learn something of God.*

Here the Gardiner may receive the Gospel as brought to him in his own language, and may consider the Parable of a certain man that had a fig-

tree

tree planted in his Vineyard, &c. Luke 13. 7, 8. *That is, God, who for our capacity is compared to a man, signifying, that he used them not as beasts and slaves, but lovingly and kindly as men do, or should do one to another, drawing them with the cords of a man, and the bands of love,* Hos. 11. 4. Had a fig-tree planted in his Vineyard,] *that is, had a people whom he had chosen to himself, and both planted, pruned, and watered, by his word and Sacraments: by the* Vineyard *he may understand the Church of the* Jews, *or the Land of* Jury, *and by the* fig-tree *the Inhabitants thereof. Of God's particular planting this Vine, we read,* Psal. 80. 8, 9. *God brought a Vine out of* Egypt, *cast out the Heathen, and planted it, prepared room for it, and caused it to take deep root, so that it filled the Land, the hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughes thereof were like the goodly Cedars. And whensoever the Gardiner (like* Adam) *walketh among the trees of the Garden, and beholdeth the Vine, he may think of that Mystical Union between Christ and his Church; that he is the Vine, his people the branches, that whosoever abideth in him, and he in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit. That the Church of God also is a Vineyard of red wine, that the Lord doth keep it, and water it every moment, and lest any hurt it, he will keep it night*

and

and day, Isa.27.2,3. *That men also are compared to Trees, as in* Jotham's *Parable, who compareth* Abimilech *to the Bramble, a base Plant, usurping Authority, when the more noble Trees, the Olive, the Fig-tree, and the Vine refuse it. In a word! that the good man is compared to the green-tree; and the wicked unto the dry.*

The Scripture is very copious in borrowed expressions, and partly for our weakness condescending to us, to make us to understand the deep Mysteries of God by earthly things. It sets forth Christ (as one noteth.) 1. *From inanimate things, from* the Sun, the Star, a Rock. 2. *By vegitative,* the Root, the Branch, 3. *From sensitives,* the Lion *called* the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah.* 4. *From Rationals*: the Son of man, *to shew, that Christ is all in all.*

Parables are either. 1. Φύσεως, *when the nature of the thing doth make the comparison. as in that of the seed; the variety of increase by the word preached is expressed by the greater or lesser increase of the grain, according to the ground whereon it falleth. Or* 2. διαθέσεως, *when the disposition or affection makes it, as when Christ compareth himself to Children piping and dancing, to express the mild means he used for the saving mens souls. Or* 3. παθῶς, *when a passion, or perturbation makes it, as when Christ's coming is resem-*

resembled to a Thieves Burghlary, or to a woman's travel for the suddenness and affrightment. Or 4. παραξεως, *when the action is only brought for comparison, as in the Parable of the unjust Steward,* Luke 16.6. *that as he made friends of his Masters money against an hard time, so should we of the goods lent us by the Lord, by giving alms to the poor, whose prayers may help us in the day of tryal.*

Our Saviour was frequent in the use of Parables in his discourse and doctrine, and therein he accommodated his speech to his Auditors. The Jewish Nation was much used to Parables, as appears by the doctrine of the Prophets of old. So the corruption of the Church is set forth by the similitude of a degenerate Vine, Isa. 5. *and of a most unclean harlot,* Ezek. 16. 30, 31. *&c. we read* Ezek. 21. 2.—6. *Of a Parable of a Wood to be burnt with fire: then the Prophet is commanded to turn his speech to the men of* Jerusalem, *and to denounce destruction to them from* ver. 7. ad. 10. *at length he is commanded to sigh, and groan, and lament bitterly, even to the pain of his loins: And if they enquire into the cause of these things, to answer, because evils are coming, at which every heart shall melt away. Now by this kind of language Christ took a course to enflame their minds after Gospel mysteries. And albeit divine mysteries*

ries were veiled in the Parables, as barely propounded to the reprobate world, making them the more inexcusable, through the just judgment of God; yet these mysteries were revealed by Parables as clearly expounded to the elect, through the goodness of God in Jesus Christ.

But although Parables do familiarly explain and illustrate divine truths, yet they darken divine truths to some, to whom it is not given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; and our Saviour saith, that therefore he spake in Parables to them, because they seeing saw not, and hearing heard not, nor did they understand. A singular judgment of God on them for their contumacy and contempt of the Gospel. It is an observation of Oleaster, *that the holy Prophets (especially to great men) spake most in Parables, that since the people were so shy of naked truth, it might be presented in some Guise.*

Doubtless, the design of our Saviour in laying things under parabolical expressions, and as it were out of sight, was, that his hearers might seek out the things hereby intended with more diligence, and find them with more pleasure; for this way of Illustration makes things very delightful and pleasant, and it is not only a way, whereby the ignorant may be made to understand, but the scope of them being once found, it will then appear, that no

fa-

falshoods, but real truths are contained in them; because truths, not falshoods, were not only intended, but signifyed by them, and so Parables are not only lawful, but commendable, and very grateful to the ingenious Reader or Hearer.

How then should every one desire to know the meaning of Scripture-parables? as Christ's Disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the Parable of the Tares of the field, *Matth. 13. 36. that so they may come to the clear and sound knowledge of divine truth. Parables are pleasant, like a Picture drawn with lively colours. And profitable also.* Galeacius Caracciolus, *that noble Marquess of* Vico, *was converted by a similitude used by* Peter Martyr *in a Sermon, seconded with private discourse.*

Much honoured in the Lord!

Here you have in this ensuing Treatise (which I humbly Dedicate to you) a judicious Explanation, and faithful Application of one of our Saviours Parables: The Parable of the Great Supper, *to which many Guests were invited. The Author was better known to you than to my self, yet not altogether a stranger to me. He was not only a word-man, but a work-man; a work-man that needed not to be ashamed: a pattern of wholsome*

words

words in sound teaching, a pattern of good works in well doing, so that a man might read his Sermons written as it were in the lines of his life. He was a light of direction in teaching, and a pattern of perfection (as it were) in his life. His Preaching and his Practice; his Words and his Works agreed together. The Law of God is a Lanthorn, good example bears it; it is safe following him that carrys the light. That Minister only know how to speak well, that hath learned to do well. Then doth the seed of the word bring forth fruit, when the godliness of the Preacher doth water it in the breast of the Hearer. Thus craving pardon for this my boldness; that the Lord may add to those gifts and blessings he hath bestowed upon you, is the prayer of

Your most humble and affectionate Servant in the Gospel,

W. GEARING.

THE

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FINIS.

THE PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER OPENED.

LUKE 14. 16.

Then said he unto him, A certain man made a Great Supper, and bad many.

SERM. I.

CHAP. I.

THese words are a Parable delivered by our Saviour, whose usual manner it was to propound Divine Truths under such Figurative representations. Wherefore

in the handling of a Parable let us observe how the genuine sence of the same may be found out: for the mis-apprehension of Parables hath sometimes caused strange constructions of the holy Scriptures. Now in a Parable there are three considerable particulars to be observed. 1. The root, or scope of a parable. 2. The rind, or sensible similitude. 3. The fruit, or spiritual meaning. And this all along we must hold as a Canon in the interpretation of a parable, that there is nothing false, absurd, and impossible in the Parables of our Saviour.

Tota difficultas parabolæ ex tribus capitibus pendere videtur, ex Radice, Cortice, & fructu. Salmero de parab.

Now farther, that we may rightly understand the meaning of a Parable according to its true scope, we must either look before upon the occasion of it, as *ver.* 7. or else behind upon the conclusion of it, *Matth.* 25. 13. or else into it upon the connexion of it. This course the *Grecians* took in the understanding of their Apologues or Fables.

Ex profabulatione, vel affabulatione, vel ipsa fabula: Sic Graci loquuntur. Προμύθιον, ἐπιμύθιον, μῦθος.

In this parable we are first to look upon the occasion of it, which is 1. More remote;

mote; occasioned from the invitation of one that made a Feast, *ver.* 12. 2. More immediate, occasioned from the communication of one who was at the feast, *ver.* 15. *Then said he, &c.*] first it answers to that, *when he was bidden to the Feast*. He spiritualizeth that meeting with discourse proper to the occasion.

CHAP. II.

Observ. HEnce I observe, that it is true Christian practice to spiritualize earthly things, *John* 3. 12. This may thus appear.

1. Such practice is the imitation of Christ, which may be shewn in some particulars of his practice. 1. In his calling fishers to be preachers, he spiritualized their work by making them fishers of men, *Matth.* 4. 18, 19. Then they left their other Calling, being called unto this, and sufficiently gifted for it: let this be observed against the practice of some, who would be accounted preachers, & yet are not gifted, nor called, nor perswaded to leave off their other Callings. This of fishing is an apt Metaphor. The world is the sea, unsetled, tumultuous: the Church is the Boat, continually tossed with waves. The fishes are

men, which devour one another in the sea. The word of God is the net which takes hold of all sorts of men. Ministers are fishers, whose work is toylsome, yet various and delightsome: Sometimes preparing, sometimes casting the net, sometimes drawing it. Some count preaching no labour, or toyl, and so rashly venture upon it, but these are like some idle companions, that ever and anon go a fishing in fair weather for an hour or two: Will ye call such fisher-men? No: Fishers are such as make it their work night and day, wet and dry.

Morbus est corruptio totius entis.

2. When our Saviour saw one sick of the Palsy, he spiritualized his sickness, by considering sin under the notion of sickness, *Matth.* 9. 2. Sin is the sickness of the soul, and pardon the health of it. The fall of our first-parents did wound us, and that wound is putrified: from thence is the rise of all manner of distempers within us: and every sickness may put us in mind of this.

3. When he was at *Jacob's* well, he spiritualized that water by discoursing of the water of life, *John* 4. 10. The grace of God being of a cleansing, cooling, and quenching nature like water, which runs through several chan-

channels, till it be ſwallowed up in the Ocean.

4. When his Diſciples prayed him to eat, he ſpiritualized thoſe words by making his father's work his meat, *John* 4. 31, 34. He took as much delight in obeying the will of God, as any do in eating their meat when they are hungry.

5. When there was talking of harveſt, he ſpiritualized it by diſcourſing of the harveſt for converſion of ſouls, *John* 4. 35. The harveſt of the ſeed ſown by the Prophets, appearing as ripe fruit in the converſion of ſouls by the Apoſtles.

6. When he and his Diſciples viewed the Temple, he ſpiritualized that ſight by diſcourſing of the Temple's and the world's deſtruction, *Matth.* 24. 2. The Temple was ſet on fire by *Titus* his ſouldides, but the induſtry of man could not quench it. *Titus* would have preſerved the Temple, as one of the worlds wonders. Thus all the world will be in a flame, and irreſiſtibly burnt one day.

CHAP. III.

Queſt. HOw *may we ſpiritualize earthly things?*

Resp. 1. In our *Meditation*: and that in a representative manner, by way of resemblance. *Behold the Husband-man, &c. Jam.* 5.7. that is, with the eyes of your understanding: *Consider how he waiteth for the harvest.* Is the harvest precious to husband-men, and should not the coming of Christ be much more precious to Christians? doth he toyl for the Corn at harvest, and should we think much to be at any cost and pains till we come to the reward in Heaven?

2. In our *Affection*: even in an exulting manner, rejoycing in God above, by the things we receive from him here below. The mercies which we daily receive, should more endear our souls to the God of mercies, 1 *Sam.* 2. 1. *Psal.* 116. 1. remembring and prizing the giver for the gifts-sake.

3. In our *Communication*: and that in an argumentative manner, discoursing of the providence of God, from what we see here below. Thus *Job* reasons out the case with his wife, to clear God's uprightness in his saddest dispensations, *Job* 2. 10. afterwards he reasoneth with his friends to clear his own integrity under those divine dispensations.

4. In our *Conversation*: and that in an exemplary manner, leading stricter and holier lives from the consideration of those tempo-

ral

ral mercies, whereby our lives are maintained, *Ezr.* 9. 13, 14. if God renew our lives, should not we renew our obedience?

The reasons why we should thus spiritualize earthly things are these.

Reas. 1. God hath appointed all things here below to raise us up unto him who is above, *Job* 12. 7. creatures are glasses to represent the Creatour. They have a teaching voice, they read us Divinity-Lectures of God's providence. The world below is as a glass, wherein we may see the world above: they who cannot read other books, may read the Volume of the creatures: here they may run and read. This is the plow-mans Alphabet, the Sheepherds Kalendar, the Travellers Perspective. The least creature hath some lively resemblance of the great God.

Seculum Speculum.

2. This is the way to have always an heaven upon the earth, which we should aspire after, *Psal.* 73. 25. 'Tis said of two worthy Divines, the one reconciled heaven and earth, because worldly occasions did not distract him in heavens way. The other turn'd earth into heaven by a spiritual improvement of all earthly affairs.

Mr. *Ball*, Mr. *Dod.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Use 1. HErein ye may ſee a main difference between the children of this world & the children of God. The children of this world are like little children, who finding a picture in a book, do graze upon, and make ſport with it, but conſider not who it is: but God's children are like thoſe men who examine the ſtory the picture repreſenteth: they will pick ſome farther matter out, than that which is repreſented to the eye.

Here we may alſo ſee, how far they are from ſpiritualizing earthly enjoyments, who abuſe them unto wickedneſs, not acknowledging from whence they come, but uſing them contrary to the honour of the true owner of them, *Hoſ.* 2. 5. This is fighting againſt God with his own weapons, heaping ſins againſt him, while he heaps kindneſſes upon them. Great ingratitude!

Use 2. Take this by way of caution: our ſpiritualizing earthly things is not the ſame with God's ſpiritualizing us. When he ſpiritualizeth us, he changeth our natures, turning our ſinful qualities into ſpiritual, pulling down one frame, and ſetting up another, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. But when we ſpiritualize the

the creature, we do not change the nature of it, we only make use of it unto such spiritual ends.

Moreover, though true Christians do spiritualize earthly things, yet there be those who are called Christians, that carnalize spiritual things, who conceive of heavenly things with gross and carnal thoughts, because they are represented under earthly terms and figures. *Solomon's* song hath been abused by many this way. Some are so drowned in *natura naturata*, that they do not think of *natura naturans*.

Use 3. Let us all be exhorted to the practice of this truth.

1. Let us spiritualize earthly possessions: Make use of the goods ye possess unto those high and noble ends, as everlastingly to be advantaged by them, *Luke* 16. 9. Testifie your faith by your works, and your works by the distribution of your goods: look upon your houses ye dwell in, but as houses of clay, and think of the eternal mansions, *John* 14. 2. Our hearts should not be upon our Estates: an heart surcharged with the cares of this life, is like a foul stomach, which unless it be emptied by a Vomit, it fills the body with noysome diseases.

Rebus non me trado, sed commodo. Sen.

2. Let

2. Let us ſpiritualize earthly callings: God made none to be idle. Whiles ye are diligent in any particular calling, ſpiritualize that in giving all diligence about the calling of Chriſtianity, 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. Trade and traffick for heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20. Let faith be your factor into that far Country, and that is the way to gain the Pearl of great price.

πολίτευμα.

3. Let us ſpiritualize earthly relations, being weaned from thoſe we do enjoy, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. And being raiſed by the ſame to think of that relation between Chriſt and the ſoul, or Chriſt and his Church, *Eph.* 5. 30.

uxori nubere nolo meæ.

4. Let us ſpiritualize earthly affections, 1 *Cor.* 7. 30. When the affections of joy or ſorrow are running, ſee that they run in the right channel; your joy for Chriſt, your ſorrow for ſin.

5. Let us ſpiritualize earthly afflictions, looking upon them as tryals, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. They are tryals both of corruption and grace, for the conſuming of the one, for the refining of the other. Let afflictions make you more ſerious to look into your ways, more conſcientious to look after your ways.

6. Let

6. Let us ſpiritualize earthly delights: When ye ſee your Field or Garden bravely decked, remember they are gone in an inſtant, *Jam.* 1. 11. Set your hearts on comforts of a laſting nature. Heaven is ſet forth by all thoſe expreſſions of delight which we are taken with upon the earth, as a City, a Country, a Kingdom, an Inheritance, Reſt, our Fathers houſe, *Abraham*'s boſome. Some delight in the City, others in the Country, ſome delight in Honour, others in Pleaſure and Profit.

7. Let us ſpiritualize earthly deliverances: Is it ſuch a mercy to be freed from trouble, from ſickneſs, from war, then what a mercy is it to be freed from hell? How much are we bound to bleſs God for Chriſt, who is *Jeſus that delivereth us from wrath to come,* 1 Theſ. 1. 10?

8. Let us ſpiritualize earthly dominions: Is it an honour to be Head Governour of a Town, or Ruler of a Nation? what will it then be to be Judges of the world? and ſuch honour ſhall all the Saints have, 1 *Cor.* 6. 2. As Chriſtians ſhould not diſdain thoſe below them, ſo they need not envy thoſe above them.

To direct you therein uſe theſe means.

1. Look that ye have a ſpiritual mind:

As

As the eye is the light of the whole body, so is the mind of the whole man, *Matth.* 6. 22. An impure mind is like mud water, but a pure mind is like clear water, whereby other things look clear.

2. Maintain spiritual converse and society, where ye may hear spiritual discourse, *Heb.* 10. 25. Holy Conferences, wherein Christian experiences are related, are great advantages unto this.

To move you hereunto Consider.

Mot. 1. If you do but enjoy the bare use of earthly things, you live not only beneath Christians, but beneath men. The very beasts have creatures as the objects of their sences, and that in an exquisite manner.

2. Those that now turn earth into heaven in the spiritualizing of earthly things, they shall one day be translated from earth to heaven, to the enjoyment of eternal things, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. This spiritualizing earth, doth likewise make way for the familiarizing of death.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Then said he unto him, &c.

THis [*Then*] relateth to that [*When*] in the former verse, where we have the immediate occasion of this Parable. One of the guests being somewhat affected with our Saviour's Table-discourse, speaks thus by way of admiration, *Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the Kingdom of God.* This eating of bread may be taken in the same sense, in which drinking of wine is taken, *Matth.* 26. 29. The phrases do import the enjoyment of eternal goods both for necessity and delight in heaven, which goods are figured or shadowed out by corporal eating and drinking. But our Saviour in his answer here, takes that man off, and us in him, from a general admiration of their happiness in heaven, to a particular application of the means conducing to that happiness, even the receiving the grace of the Gospel, which seems to be the drift and design of this Parable. They that would eat bread, or enjoy fellow-ship with God in heaven, must first eat bread, or partake of the Gospel-provision here on earth. Hence I observe:

Sect.

Sect. 1.

Observ. That the way to enjoy the eternal good things in the kingdom of glory, is to close with the spiritual good things in the kingdom of grace, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3.

Quest. *What? are those eternal good things in heaven represented under eating and drinking?*

Resp. 1. Most intimate and immediate union with God: Eating and drinking implys the inmost uniting of the body and meat together. The pious soul doth fully possess God in heaven. Here we are (as it were) absent from the Lord, but there we are present with him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6, 8. Not but that now Saints do truly enjoy God, but then more intimately and fully: We are now under his influence, dominion, and blessing, but then we shall always be before his face. Now Saints are (as it were) in the Suburbs of heaven, then they shall be in the City: now in the Gallery, then in the Presence-Chamber. There is great difference between abiding in the Presence-Chamber of a Prince, and abiding within his dominion, though under his protection, and related to him as a servant.

2. It denoteth the abundant supply of all wants: Eating and drinking implys the supply

ply of neceſſity, the maintaining of life. Here we are at continual reparations: in heaven we ſhall not want any thing, there's a full table: our preſent imperfections in our graces will then be made up, 1 *Cor.* 13. 9, 10. And all our inabilities in our duties will be happily ſupplyed. Now we have all the parts of the new man, but then we ſhall have the perfect ſtature of the new man, *Eph.* 4. 13. There is a great difference between the rough draught, and perfect draught of a Picture: Now we have the lineaments and feature, but then we ſhall have the moſt exquiſite complexion and favour of the new creature.

3. The full and familiar enjoyment of good company: Eating and drinking together implys good fellowſhip. There is excellent good company in heaven, and enough of it, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. Then Saints will not be ſtrange one to another, nor ſhy of each other, as here full oft they are.

4. Compleat ſatisfaction in the fruition of all contents and delights: Eating and drinking is for delight and merriment, as well as for neceſſity. There is feaſting in eating: heaven will be a continual feaſt, and yet the ſtomach not cloyed, *Pſal.* 16. 11. Our hungring and thirſting will be turned into ſatisfaction,

when

when our seeking God will be turn'd into our seeing of God.

Sect. 2.

Quest. 2. *What are those spiritual good things which we are to close with in the kingdom of grace, represented under eating and drinking?*

Resp. 1. Spiritual priviledges, which are provided for us in the grace of the Gospel, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Zech.* 13. 1. As reconciliation, Adoption, Remission, Sanctification, Vocation, Salvation. This Gospel-provision is the plank after the shipwreck, or the Ark in the midst of the deluge. There is no escaping destruction, or obtaining salvation but this way.

Tabula post naufragium.

2. Spiritual ordinances for the conveying of spiritual priviledges, and ensuring them: As preaching of the Gospel, administration of the Seals of the Covenant to them that embrace the Covenant. In the Sacraments Christian Religion is taught (as it were) by Emblems and Hieroglyphicks. This latter ordinance is God's ensuring office to confirm his people in the faith. These ordinances are the Wells of salvation, *Isa.* 12. 3. And Gospel-grace is the fountain of salvation.

3. Spi-

3. Spiritual graces for the improvement of spiritual ordinances: These are the more immediate work of the spirit, and so called the fruit of the spirit, *Gal.* 5. 22. These be the clusters of Grapes to make us in love with the Holy-Land, notwithstanding all the opposition we meet with in heaven's way: this fruit grows no where but in Christ's Garden, *Cant.* 4. 12. And the Vine which bears those Grapes is himself, *John* 15. 1. Interest makes for influence, and so it comes to pass, that Saints bear this fruit.

4. Spiritual duties for the expressing spiritual graces: As praying, hearing, exhorting one another, *Jude v.* 20. And as Christ is given for glory and happiness, so he is given for grace, and likewise for duty, *Phil.* 4. 13. And hereby he is shewn to be Mediator of Redemption and Intercession too.

Sect. 3.

Quest. 3. *How are we to close with these spiritual good things?*

Resp. 1. We are to receive them by faith, embracing the grace of the Gospel, *John* 1. 12. This is (as it were) the touching of the hem of Christ's Garment. Believing is that particular application of Christ, which is represented by eating, *John* 6. 53. This causeth a sweet savour and relish in the heart.

2. We are to walk as we have received Christ, *Col.* 2. *viz.* by leading an holy life, by vertue drawn from him through our union with him: giving the world a proof in our holy life of the vertue in Christ's death, for the rectifying our crooked nature. So much as we have received of the knowledge of Christ, so much we are to testifie of obedience unto Christ.

The reason why we must close with spiritual good things, if we would enjoy eternal, is

Because the one is part of the other: Saints in heaven, and Saints upon earth make up but one family, *Eph.* 3. 15. 'Tis but one building, one house: and it is so contrived, that we must go through one room into the other. Grace is the beginning of glory; some compare it to the golden chain in *Homer*, whose top was fastned to the Chair of *Jupiter*, grace will reach glory, and it must precede glory.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. THis informeth us. 1. That it is good for man now to draw near to God, *Psal.* 73. 28. It tends to his everlasting happiness. 'Tis good to have our faces *Sion*-ward, and to walk that way, that we may see

ſee the face of God with perfection in *Sion.* Upon this conſideration we ſhould be always renewing our acceſſes to God, and to maintain ſuch communion is the work of a Chriſtian converſation; the Lord is nigh unto all ſuch as thus draw nigh unto him, *Pſal.*145.18.

2. See their vanity who draw back from God, or bid God depart from them when he comes near them in the means of grace vouchſafed to them, *Pſal.* 73. 27. *Job* 21. 14. Sin divideth between God and the ſoul, *Iſa.* 59. 2. Sin maketh men afraid of God's preſence. Guilt cannot endure the thoughts of a Judge; when our Saviour would reſemble our apoſtatized nature in a Parable, he doth it by a prodigal's going into a far Country, *Luke* 15. 14. Thus men naturally and voluntarily oppoſe the kingdom of grace, and what is this but to exclude themſelves from the kingdom of glory? for they who now bid God depart from them as obſtinate creatures, God will one day bid them depart from him as curſed creatures.

Peccata elongant nos voluntate, non loco.

Uſe 2. Yet this doth not make, but many may partake of Goſpel-mercies in the kingdom of grace, and yet never come to glory. Nay, the higher their priviledges have been,

Ingentia beneficia, flagitia, supplicia.

the greater their damnation may be, if they abuse those priviledges, *Mat.* 11. 22. Men are therefore the worse, because they had the advantage to be better. If Turks and Indians shall be damned, surely prophane and hypocritical Englishmen shall be double damned. Infidelity is a worse sin than Sodomy, because it refuseth the remedy provided for all sin.

CHAP. VII.

Use 3. WOuld you come into the kingdom of glory, then be exhorted.

1. To come into the kingdom of grace, subject your selves to that kingdom of heaven which God hath erected here upon earth in the dispensation of the Gospel: we may try our selves herein by those several resemblances, whereby our Saviour sets forth the nature of this kingdom.

In pretio, in promisso, in primitiis.

1. 'Tis compared to *good seed*, Matth. 13. 24. Which is operative, and brings forth fruit like it self. It is called the kingdom of heaven in the price, promise, and first-fruits. That spi-

ſpiritual principle which is called the ſeed of God, makes us like to God, and tends to the full fruition of God in the other world.

2. 'Tis like unto *a grain of Muſtard ſeed*, which though a ſmall grain, produceth a great Tree, *ver.* 31. Thus the word of this kingdom, though little at firſt in appearance, it produceth great effects.

Nuſquam magis tota natura quam in minimis.

3. It is like unto *Leaven*, *ver.* 33. Which ſoon diffuſeth it ſelf into the whole lump. All the faculties of the ſoul partake of the power of grace, where 'tis implanted in truth.

4. 'Tis like unto *a Treaſure*, *ver.* 44. Which is an heap of precious things laid up for future uſe. The word of this kingdom is hid within the heart, both the word of precept, of promiſe and threats: all which kinds, and all the particulars under them, are of ſpecial uſe for the well ordering of our converſation.

θησαυρὸς παρὰ τὸ τιθέναι εἰς αὐτόν.

5. 'Tis like unto *one Pearl of great price*, ver. 46. Chriſt alone as held forth in the Goſpel, and bearing ſway within the heart, is more to be prized than all things elſe.

6. It is like unto *a Net*, ver. 47. St. *Baſil*

comparing the Gospel to a Net, make's *hope* to be the Cork, which keeps it always above water, and *fear* to be the lead which sinketh it.

2. Live as under the Laws of this kingdom of grace.

1. Perform allegiance unto God; yield your selves unto him, *Rom.6.13.* Princes do claim tribute and homage, and the persons of the subjects (as occasion serveth) are to be at their service: may not God do the like?

2. Expect protection from God, draw nigh to him, *Jam.4.8.* Put your selves under his wings, to live under divine influence. Spirits may have converse with one another, though at a distance: Thus our souls may have communion with our father which is in heaven. Here put forth an act of faith, to cast your selves upon God; & an act of fear to keep you in aw of God, that ye may be sincere in his presence. Loose and regardless persons are far from God, walk before me and be upright, *Gen.* 17. 1. Those that would sit down with *Abraham* in the kingdom of heaven, *Matth.* 8. 11. Must now walk with *Abraham* as before the Lord.

3. Pray that the Territories of this kingdom of grace may be enlarged more and more upon the face of the earth, *Matth.6.* 10.

That

That saving health may be made known among all Nations.

4. Prepare for the translation of the kingdom of grace into the kingdom of glory, when this mediatory kingdom shall cease, and God shall be all in all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 28. When Christ shall reign without Adversaries, and without outward means and ordinances: so live, that ye may be able to say in truth of heart, come Lord Jesus, *Rev*, 22. 20.

SERM. II.

Luke 14. 16.

Then said he unto him, A certain man, &c.

CHAP. I.

Παραβολὴ collatio, comparatio, quæ res diversæ ostenduntur in aliquo esse similes.

YOu have heard of the occasion of these words both remote and immediate: we are now to enquire concerning the form of them, and that is parabolical: this form of speech is frequent in Scripture, whence I observe:

Observ. It was our Saviour's usual manner when he was upon the earth to speak in Parables, *Matth.* 13. 18,24, 31,33.

Parabola est rerum, sive veravum, sive verisimilium, ad aliud significandum apposita & artificiosa narratio.

A Parable is an artificial framing of some thing in manner of an History, by way of comparison, to illustrate something else. The substance of these words is set down by several Authors, cited by *Salmeron*, *Hierom*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others. Yet the word [Parable] in Scripture-sense is diversly taken; As

1. For *a Type*, *Heb.* 9. 9. ἥτις παραβολὴ εἰς τὸν καιρὸν, &c. The exemplar of something which in due time was really to exist. The ceremonial service, which figured and shadowed out Christ coming in the flesh, and entring into glory, is there called a Parable.

2. For *a similitude*: Thus *Isaac*'s deliverance from death after God's probational precept, and *Abraham*'s intentional act to put him to death, was a Parable, *Heb.* 11. 19. A Figure, Similitude, or Representation of the Resurrection, ὅθεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐν παραβολῇ ἐκομίσατο.

3. For *a Proverb*; a common speech taken up

up in any Country, whereby a plain truth is spoken in figurative terms, *Luke* 4. 23. Adages are witty and summary sentences, πάντως ἐρεῖτέ μοι τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην.

4. For *an excellent and mysterious saying*, Psal. 49. 4. Yet the former description is the proper meaning of a Parable, according to the tenor of this Parable we have in hand, and others. Those Divine truths which are most necessary to be known, Christ spake in Parables: As

1. The Apostacy of man by nature. This is shewn in the Parable of the Prodigal son, going into a far Country, *Luke* 15. 13. And wasting his whole substance with riotous living, not caring to save any part: we are utterly undone, we have nothing left that good is.

2. The recovery of man by the provision of the Gospel: This is shewn in our present Parable, *ver.* 23. God is willing that the many mansions in heaven should be filled up with the many fallen creatures upon the earth, closing with that grace which he tenders to them.

3. God hath his several times to call men, and the outward and inward call do not alway go together. This is shewn in that Parable of the Housholder going out to hire labourers

rers into his Vineyard, *Matth.* 20. Thus many are outwardly called, few are inwardly called, or truly chosen, *ver.* 16. *Chrysostom* in one of his Sermons tells the people of *Antioch*, that though there were many thousands in that City, yet he could scarce think one hundred of them could be saved in that condition wherein they were, such villany was in their youth, such sloth in the old men, and so he goes on.

4. As among hearers there are few good, so among those that are good, some are more fruitful than others. This is shewn in the Parable of the seed, *Matth.* 13. 23. Every man cannot excel: we should not be discouraged if we come short of others. These are truths necessary to be known, there are likewise truths necessary to be done, contained in Parables: As

1. The necessity of joyning faith unto the outward participation of any spiritual ordinance. This is shewn in the Parable of the Wedding-feast. What a sad case was that man in, who had not a Wedding-garment, *Mat.* 22. 12, 13. He was as it were muzzeled and hampered, and haltered up: He had as it were a gag in his mouth, and an halter about his neck, for not having

ἐφιμώθη.

a Wedding-garment upon his back.

2. The neceſſity of ſhewing mercy, and extending charity to all ſorts of people, even to our enemies. This is ſhewn in the Parable of the *Samaritan* relieving the *Jew*, though his enemy, *Luke* 10. 30, 37. Any one in want is our neighbour for relief.

3. The neceſſity of improving all thoſe gifts which God entruſteth us with. This is ſhewn in the Parable of the talents, *Matth.* 25. 14. And though we cannot do ſo much as ſome others, yet let us do what we can in our places, and God will accept us.

4. The neceſſity of continual watching againſt Chriſt's coming. This is ſhewn in the Parable of the ten Virgins, *Matth.* 25. 13. For as we know not when he will come to appear in glory, ſo neither do we know, when he will come to ſummon us by death to appear before him.

CHAP. II.

THe Reaſons why Chriſt ſpake thus in Parables are theſe.

Reaſ. 1. He did it in a way of judgment unto wicked and obſtinate men.

1. For their obduration: Parables being Riddles to them, he veiled the amiableneſs of

thoſe

those truths from the eyes of their understandings which they profanely neglected and derided, *Matth.* 13. 13, 14, 15. Their wilful blindness and stubbornness, deserves this judiciary blindness and hardness.

2. For their conviction, and self-condemnation: So this makes for the clearing of God's justice in those judgments which he inflicteth upon the contemners of grace. This is observable in the *Jews*, in that Parable of the Vineyard, where they condemn themselves in the third person, saying, *He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let the Vineyard out to others*, Matth. 21. 41. Though when they perceived the Parable touched themselves, they thought this judgment hard, and cryed, *God forbid*, Luke 20. 16.

Object. *But how can one and the same way darken, and clear truth?*

Integra parabola rem tegit & claudit: fracta autem & explicata rem aperit. Salmer.

Resp. I answer, the bare propounding of a Parable may darken the truth, but the opening of a Parable cleareth it. And this advantage Christ's Disciples had, *Mark* 4. 11. A Parable not interpreted and explained, is like to a Picture with a Curtain before it, but the Curtain is drawn away in the Interpretation.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us of the excellent manner of Christ's delivering spiritual truths. Parables and Proverbs are mysterious, *Prov.* 1. 3,4,5. There is much in a little; the Scriptures are both hidden and plain, deep and shallow. The Elephant may swim, and the Lamb wade. A Learned man observeth, that the Scriptures are so written, that the weakest capacities, (if willing and desirous) may know them, and the most reaching heads (when captious) may stumble and break their necks.

This informs us likewise of Christ's goodness to mankind in his manner of propounding of divine truth: For

1. Instruction by Parables is that way, wherewith both *Jews* and *Gentiles* were acquainted. Thus our Saviour brought heavenly truths to *Jews* and *Gentiles* in their own language, in that way they had been most used to. The *Jews* were acquainted with Parables, as appeareth *Psal.*78.2. And all sorts of the *Gentiles* were instructed this way. The *Grecians*, as appeareth by *Xenophon*, *Plato*, *Pythagoras*, *Demosthenes*, who abounded in Parables: Likewise the *Egyptians*, as is evident in

in their Hieroglyphical Learning, brought in by *Mercurius Tresmegistus*. They described a year by a snake turning it's tail into it's mouth. They described God by an eye joyned with a staff, signifying he was all-seeing, and Almighty. They described a King by a Bee, having honey and a sting, thereby signifying clemency and justice, two Princely properties: Mercy and Judgment should meet together upon the Throne.

Annus vertitur in se. Familiare est Syris, & maximè Palæstinis ad omnem Sermonem parabolas jungere. Hieronym.

2. Instruction by Parables is a way very advantagious for man: For

1. Parables are presented to the senses, and so the ready and plain way to convey a truth to the understanding. By that which we are acquainted with, we easily receive somewhat of the nature of a spiritual truth. Similitudes teach clearly and plainly, *Jam.* 3. 3, 4, 'Tis a familiar way whereby knowledge insinuates it self into us. Similitudes work sooner upon weak capacities, than sylogisms do.

2. Parables help the Memory. Being taken from things obvious to the senses, they make the greater impression upon the Memory,

ry. This appeareth by the help which we have in a local memory. Several Pearls or Jewels are kept more safely when they are hung upon a string. A Parable is as such a string containing many precious truths.

Species intelligibiles sensibilibus speciebus affixæ, tenacius hærent memoriæ.

3. Parables quicken the affections and spirits of men. They kindle a desire after, and delight in knowledge, *Matth.* 13. 36. *Demosthenes* quickned and rouzed up the *Athenians* by a Parable: when *Philip*, King of *Macedon* used this stratagem to betray them, desiring them, that if they would not grant his request in other things, yet that they would grant him this, to give up some certain chief ones among them, that did so declaim against him. That Orator used this Apologue. There was an irreconcilable hatred between the Wolves and the Sheep: the Wolves at length sent to the sheepherds, that they were willing to be at peace, upon this condition that they would deliver up into their hands all their Dogs. Upon this Parable the *Athenians* were kept from *Philips* circumvention; they apprehended the danger of the motion, and so would not entertain it.

4. Parables convince the judgment: *David* gave a just verdict against himself, when the

the case was propounded in a Parable, 2 *Sam.* 12. 5. Parables are heard without prejudice, when down-right expressions sometimes exasperate.

CHAP. IV.

Use 2. THough Christ did speak Parables often (that is feigned, or invented) yet he never spake a lye, or a false thing. St. *Augustine* tells us, that every thing that is feigned is not a lye, but that which is feigned without significancy: As for Parables they are invented for their significancy, and moral, and with no intent to deceive.

Non omne quod fingimus est mendacium, sed quando id fingimus, quod nihil significat. August.

Use 3. Take heed of abusing Christ's Parables by straining them too much: This is as wringing the nose till bloud comes out, *Prov.* 30. 31. Instances may be given out of Popish comments, as in that of the Traveller betwixt *Jerusalem* and *Jericho*. They understand it of *Adam* surprized by the Devil, and make use of his being half dead, to prove that *Adam* was not utterly spoiled of all his first excellencies. Then as by the *two pence* given to the Host, they understand the two Books of the Old and New Testaments, committed

mitted to the Church for the restoring of decayed man, so by the phrase [*Whatsoever may be laid out more.*] They will have to be meant unwritten verities, and Ecclesiastical Traditions. No parabolical Text must be interpreted against a plain Text: There is a plain Text against this Interpretation, *Eph.* 2. 1.

Here advice and Counsel is necessary:

1. Consider the nature of a Parable, how it differs from other forms of speech: As

1. It differs from *an history*, for that is a narration of a thing done; as the story of our Saviour and his Apostles, *Luke* 1. 1. *Acts* 1. 1. But a Parable is of a thing invented.

Historia est narratio rei gestæ.

2. It differs from *an example*; for examples are real instances to illustrate and confirm truth, *Job* 5. 10, 11. But Parables are but imaginary instances.

Exemplum est pars historiæ.

3. It differeth from *a metaphor*, which consists only in the borrowed signification of a word: as mourning borrowed from men, and applyed unto ways. *The ways of* Sion *do mourn*, Lam. 1. 4.

Metaphora est translatio vocabuli.

1. 4. Treasure borrowed from money, and applyed to wrath, *Rom.* 2. 5. But a Parable is a story borrowed.

Allegoria est continuata metaphora.

4. It differeth from *an Allegory*, which hath it's foundation in a true story, and from thence taken to signifie something else, *Gal.* 4. 24. But a Parable is founded upon supposition.

2. Make a right use of Christs Parables: They are mysteries and depths which the world is unacquainted with. Therefore

1. Be humble in admiring them because of their excellency. Oh the fulness that is in Scripture! Oh the riches that are contained in these golden Mines!

2. Be diligent in searching them because of their difficulty: Christ's Disciples were careful to ask him the meaning of Parables.

3. Be faithful in applying them because of their utility. And here observe what our Saviour doth often add unto his Parables, as *Matth.* 25. 13, 31. Which give light to the Parable; stick not at the Letter of a Parable, but mind the scope of it: Let Parables as much affect you, as if they were real Histories.

CHAP. V.

A certain man made a Great Supper, &c.

Sect. 1.

HAving heard the occasion and form, we are now to consider the matter of these words: and that which in order falls under our consideration in the first place, is the Master of the Feast, who is here called *A certain man.*] But who this certain man is, I find several Authors rather to have several expressions than several opinions. Some say thus, God rich in mercy, so our English Annotations. *Marlorat* saith, God courteously inviting after the manner of men. *Salmeron* saith, the merciful father, who as he is just, he is called *a Lion*, but as he is kind and bountiful, so he is called *a Man*: and he addeth a reason for the additional word [*Certain*] because he was not as yet so clearly known unto the world. The ordinary gloss saith, Christ God-man: and this sense agreeth too with the last words of the Parable, *ver.* 24. And it doth not contradict the former.

Deus benignè & humaniter invitans. Marlor. *Verbum incarnatum Christus Deus & Homo.* Gloss. Ordinar.

mer. I will take in the substance of all these expressions in one Doctrinal observation, as the fullest meaning of the words.

Obser. Christ God-man, or God in Christ is a bountiful Benefactor unto man, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. God in Christ is here called *a Man.*

1. By way of *resemblance.* Those properties of any worths appearing in man, or spoken of man, being more eminently in God: As

Ἀνδρὰ μοι ἔννεπε μοῦσα. Homer. *Arma, virumq; cano.* Virgil. *Triumviri Decemviri.*

1. *Soveraignty*: [*Man*] in Scripture is put for *a man in Authority*, one fit to Rule, or chief in Government, *Gen.* 43. 13. *Carry a Present to the man*, that is, to the Governour of the Country. In this sense the *Græcians* used the word [*Man*] Likewise the Magistrates among the *Romans* were called by the name of *Men*; whether more or fewer in Authority together, as if they were the only men. And this sense suits well with our Text, as appears by that Parable, *Mat.* 22. the same in substance with this, where the Master of the Feast is called *a certain King*, v. 2. Which word denoteth *Soveraignty.* God is elsewhere in Parables called *a certain noble man*, and *a certain rich man*, Luke 16. 1. *Luke* 19. 12. *Matth.* 25. 14. It speaks that way of

of Authority and Dignity wherein man is saved.

2. *Pity:* the word [*Man*] is used in opposition to the word [Lion] Tiger, or Wolf. And it denoteth the more pity, when the Relative word [*Father*] is added to man. Thus God pities us, and spares us *as a man*, Mal. 3. 17. And bestoweth good things upon us with tender affection. Thus he draws us with *cords of a man*, and with bands of love, *Hos.* 11. 4. A phrase taken from Cattel bred up to draw or carry, which by a wise Master are used gently, and brought to their labour without any violence.

3. *Rationality*: The word [*Man*] is put for one who is rational and understanding, *Ezek.* 1. 5, 10. The invitation of God to sinners in the Gospel is full of reason: he dealeth like a man with us; not only propounding truth, but adding several arguments to perswade us, convincing us of the equality and rationality of his ways, *Isa.* 1. 8.

Sect. 2.

II. By way of *Reality*.

1. In respect of Christ, by whom this Gospel-provision is, wherein God shews himself such a Benefactor. Thus Christ who is God, is really *a man*. There is in him 1. The *bloud of a man*.] Shedding of bloud there must be,

be, for without it there is no remission, *Heb.* 9. 22. The bloud of bruit creatures could not wash away the blots of reasonable creatures: wherefore Christ took our nature, that he might have our bloud to shed for our sin, *Heb.* 10. 4, 5, 10. There is an *Emphasis* put upon Christ *as man*, in the great business of man's salvation, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. The remedy carrying in it a sutableness to the malady: the sufferings of a man to expiate the sin of man. 2. The *bowels of a man*, Phil. 1. 8.] Which bowels he fully expressed when he was upon the earth, *Matth.* 12. 18, 19, 20. As he discovered much understanding, so likewise much affection in the work of grace towards the children of men: coming in judgment to convince men, and without violence or boisterousness, setting his steps with such heedfulness, as not to tread on a broken reed, and avoiding that rushing motion, as might easily quench smoaking Flax. Moreover he retaineth these bowels now he is in heaven, and hath a fellow-feeling of his peoples miseries, *Act.* 9. 4. Though now he be freed from that state of frailty, exposed to passibility and mortality, yet still he retains his wonted pity. 3. The *familiarity of man.*] Man is a sociable and

Manet compassio cum impassibilitate.

and familiar creature. Christ became man, that he might be a merciful High-Priest, *Heb.*2.17. Not that his becoming man made him more merciful, as though the mercies of a man were more than the mercies of God, but because by this means mercy is conveyed more sutably and familiarly to man.

Sect. 3.

2. In respect of man for whom this Gospel-provision is, wherein God sheweth himself such a Benefactor. The grace of the Gospel is called *the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards man*, Tit. 3.4. And that 1. By way of distinction from other creatures in general; which works of creation partake of common preservation, but man partakes of special salvation, *Psal.*8.4. There is a way for man to be far better hereafter than here. 2. By way of opposition unto fallen Angels in particular. They are reserved in everlasting chains. God's goodness is more manifest to men than to Angels. The Angels, though golden vessels, yet having contracted rust, were broken in pieces: but man, though an earthen vessel (when soiled) was cleansed again.

3. In respect of the Ministers of the Gospel, through whose hands this Gospel-provision is distributed. Every such Scribe *is like*

unto a man that is an Housholder, which bringeth forth of his treasure things both new and old, ἐκβάλλει, *extendit, copiose & alacriter,* extendeth plentifully and chearfully, *Matth.* 13.52.

Quest. *Why is God in Christ here called a Certain man?*

Resp. 1. This word is of an indefinite term: and so it may denote the extent of the Gospel; the grace of God offered in the Gospel, belonging to one man as well as to another, *Isa.* 55. 1.

2. This word is an obscure word, and so it may denote the mysteriousness of the Gospel: The manifestation of which in a saving manner is only to the Saints, *Col.* 1. 26. The other only hear of *one Jesus.*

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. THis informs us of the condescension of God; that he should be pleased to take our name to himself, and in his Son to take our nature to himself, *Luke* 20. 9. *Heb.* 2. 16. He assumed it, apprehended, caught, laid hold on it, as *Christ* did on *Peter*, as the Angel did on *Lot*; as men use to do on a thing they are glad they have gotten, and are loth to let go again. That

Ἐπιλαμβάνεται.

God

God thus comes down to us in our nature, and in our language, a great help it is to our faith.

It informs us also of the advancement of man: That Christ, God-man, should be such a Benefactor to man. Here we may say, what is man, that thou shouldest magnifie him! *Job* 17. 7? Man magnifies God by declaring his greatness, *Luke* 10.46. God magnifies man by making him great, by giving him some real addition of worth and respect.

תְּגַדְּלֶנּוּ

גָּדוֹל

Magnus quantitate, vel qualitate, annis honore, existimatione, authoritate.

Man is magnified in the work of creation, *Psal.* 8. 4. God created man in his own image, to be Lord of the rest of the creatures. Man is magnified in the work of Redemption. Man by his fall had laid himself low; but how is he magnified when God himself became man to recover man? *Heb.* 2.16,17. Man is also magnifyed in the work of Regeneration, being made partaker of the Divine nature, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. Endued with all those gracious qualities, which are true resemblances of God's most glorious essence. Moreover, man is magnified in the work of glo-

glorification, advanced into the highest heavens; made great with that accumulative happiness, which will admit of no addition, by reason of its compleat perfection. Christ sits at the right hand of God, and Saints go when they die where he is, *Heb.* 12. 2. 1 *John* 3. 2.

Use 2. Let me give an use of Caution. Though here the word [*Man*] is used in a magnifying sense, yet sometimes 'tis used in another sense, *Hos.* 11. 9. Where God saith, *I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, for I am God, and not man.* I am a merciful and faithful God, not cruel, variable, nor changeable, like unto man.

Homo homini lupus dæmon.

Moreover, though God at sometimes appear like a man, yet at other times he doth appear like *a Lion*, like *a Leopard*, like *a Bear bereaved of her whelps*, Hos. 13. 7, 8. The *Leopard* lurks privily to ensnare the Traveller, and the *Bear* cometh greedily with open mouth, renting the caul from the heart. This speaks the fierceness of anger, and total destruction accrewing to men. Thus we see, as God is a bountiful benefactor to penitent

Totum dilaniat, & usq; ad cor in varia scindit frusta. Zanch.

tent ſinners, ſo he is a conſuming fire to obſtinate ſinners. It is dangerous to provoke him.

Finally, though God compare himſelf to man, and ſo encourage us to come to him, yet muſt we take heed of thinking him like our ſelves, and ſo take encouragement to ſin againſt him: as though God were altogether ſuch a one as any of us, a favourer, or abettor of ſin, *Pſal.* 50. 21. To imagine him a man who cannot ſee the heart; this is like a child, a or fool, who ſhuts his eyes, and becauſe he ſees no body, he thinks no body ſees him. Or to imagine God to be ſuch a one, as may be corrupted in the work of juſtice, or overpowered like man: This were to turn the grace of God, and language of the Scripture into wantonneſs and fooliſhneſs.

CHAP. VII.

Uſe 3. LOok upon God only figuratively as man, but look upon Chriſt really as a man, made of the ſubſtance of a Woman, *Gal.* 4.4. This Mediator, *the man Chriſt Jeſus*, took upon him thoſe three Noble and neceſſary Offices belonging to the children of men, *King*, *Prieſt*, and *Prophet*. Theſe things were ſhadowed of old. Judicious Writers look

look upon that one man ſpoken of by *Ezekiel*, to be this man, *Ezek.* 9. 2. And there implyed, 1. His Kingly Office in thoſe words, *Among them*] or in the midſt of them, as a King and Commander. 2. His Prieſtly Office, implyed in his *Linnen cloathing*, uſed in holy veſtures, 1 *Sam.* 2. 18. *Pliny* tells us, that the cloathing of the *Egyptian* Prieſts was of Linnen: and 'tis thought they took the cuſtom from the Jewiſh Prieſts, who were appointed of God to wear ſuch Garments, *Exod.*28. 42, 43. 3. His Prophetical Office, ſhadowed out by the Ink-horn he had by his ſide. Prophets were to declare the mind of God by ſpeaking and writing.

Be further exhorted to hearken to this, *O ye children of men.* God as *a certain man* calls unto you O men, and to you O ſons of men, *Prov.*8.4. To the higher and meaner ſort of people. The poor are Goſpellized, ſaith our Saviour. *Smyrna* was the pooreſt, but the beſt of the ſeven Churches. Well! Let all ſorts of men obey this call: Eſpecially when we conſider thoſe relative words in Scripture added to this word [*man.*]As 1. *A King*, Matth. 22. 1. Obey him as your lawful Soveraign. 2. *A Maſter*, Eph.6.9. That Maſter *of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.* 3. A Father, *The father of glory*,

glory, Eph. 1. 17. A father that hath a kingdom to bestow upon every one of his children. 4. *An Husband*, 2 Cor. 11. 2. Thus the Church of God is called *the Lamb's wife*; Rev. 19. 7. Some Husbands are fierce like Lions, but Christ is gentle like a Lamb. Let such loving terms whereby God is pleased to familiarize his mercy to you, perswade you to close with it.

SERM. III.

LUKE 14. 16.

A certain man made a Great Supper, &c.

CHAP. I.

HAving spoken of the Maker of the Feast: we are next to consider the feast which is made, called here *a Great Supper*.] Some say, *the Gospel with the effects of it*, is meant by this Great Supper. Others say, *the grace of God in Christ*. *The bread of life*, say others. *Eternal blessedness*, say others. All these terms amount to the same

same sense, including all spirituals and eternals for the making up of man's welfare.

Quest. *But why is this called by the name of a Supper?*

Resp. Some answer thus, because it is the last refreshment manifest now in the latter days towards the end of the world. And in respect of this supper they will have the law of nature to be as a breakfast, and the law of *Moses* as a dinner. But I suppose the meaning of the word may be best gathered from the manners of people about their daily food.

The two usual times of eating both to the *Gracians*, and *Romans*, and *Jews*, are those we call *dinner* and *supper*: And their manner was to dine more sparingly, and sup more liberally. And of old the *Romans* were wont to dine by themselves, and to sup with their friends.

Hither likewise the Etymologies of the Greek and Latine words refer: yet must we not stand too exactly to difference words that are akin:

Δεῖπνον, q. διὰ πεπονημένον, *quod non tam facile ut prandium paretur: nam veterum prandium parcius & frugaliùs erat. Cœna verò exquisitior, & lautior, quum finitis dici laboribus, genio hilariùs & plenius indulgebatur.*

Cœna, q. Κοινὴ, *quia antiquitùs seorsim solebant prandere Romani, cœnare cum amicis.*

Δεῖπνον & ἄριστον *permutantur.*

akin: for dinner and supper are put sometimes for one another. That which St. *Luke* here calls *a supper*, St. *Matthew* calls *a dinner*, Matth. 22. 4. So that the meaning is, A feast at any time of the day. The Epithet [*Great*] may well be adjoyned, because the provision is so plentiful for the recovery of lost man.

CHAP. II.

HEnce I shall observe this point of Doctrine.

Observ. That Gospel-provision for the good of souls is plentiful. It is compared here and else where to a Great Supper. *Herodotus* tells us, the *Egyptians* had their greatest Feasts, their Marriage feasts at supper. It is also compared to *a feast of fat things*, delightfully refreshing the body with Wines on the Lees well refined, *Isa.* 25. 6.

Quest 1. *What is this Gospel-provision for the good of souls?*

Resp. It is the only way of man's salvation since the fall, begun in grace, and swallowed up, or perfected in glory, revealed in the holy Scriptures by the Prophets and Apostles, 1 *Pet.* 1. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Quest. 2. *How doth the provision appear to be so plentiful? how doth the feast or supper appear to be so great?*

Resp.

Resp. 1. Look at *the maker of this feast*, it is the great God who is rich in mercy, and great in love, *Eph.*2.4,5. Whose manifold wisdom hath appeared in the contrivance of this provision, *Eph.* 3. 10. 'Tis as the feast of a King, and that for the Marriage of a son, *Matth.*22.2. And no cost is spared at such seasons. The ancients had not only feasts at their marriages, but feasts before and after: they abounded in feasting about the time of marriage.

Περάυλια & ἐπάυλια.

2. Look at *the materials of this feast*: That which is the food of the soul in the first place is Christ himself, it is his body and bloud which is the bread of life, the food of our souls, *John* 60. 51, 52. The Great God, and our Saviour, the eternal son of God. Moreover *the sincere milk of the word* is the food of the soul, 1 *Pet.*2.2. The word as it is God's institution, without the mixture of man's traditions, nourisheth the soul. More particularly *the promises*, which are exceedingly great and precious, 2 *Pet.* 1.4. More especially, *the work of grace* in the soul, whereby it delighteth it self in fatness, *Isa.*55.2. And that by a direct act, receiving the grace which God offereth, justifying, sanctifying, adopting

ing, saving grace; then by a reflex act reviewing the grace which is received, which more immediately tends to the comfort of the soul. Sum up all this, here is solidity, plenty, variety; here is for necessity and delight: for health and mirth; 'tis *a great supper.*

3. Look at *the vessels at this feast*: it adds to the greatness of a feast when 'tis served in Plate, Dishes, Cups, Flaggons, Candlesticks, and all in Plate. The vessels of the Sanctury were of pure gold, *Exod* 27. The vessels wherein Gospel-provision is serv'd, are ordinances. And what is said of one ordinance [*the prayers of Saints*] may be said of all ordinances of Christ, that they are *golden vials full of odours.* Rev. 5. 8. Ordinances purely administred according to their Primitive institution.

4. Look at *the guests of this feast*, such as sit down and feed on the food provided: they are persons of great worth, such as obtain like precious faith with the Apostles and Prophets, 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. Who sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, Matth. 8. 11. They are such as are cloathed with the Righteousness of Christ, Kings and Priests to the great God of heaven and earth.

5. Look at *the attendance of this feast*, the Ministers of the Gospel, *able Ministers of the*

new Testament, 2 Cor. 3. 6. Who are the Embassadours of God, and Paranymphs of Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. These hand out this provision. They are instructed of God to instruct others; endued with heavenly gifts, *Eph.* 4. 8. For the bringing souls in, and carrying souls on in the way of heaven.

The Hebrew word for Ministery is יד *manus : per manum prophetæ.*

6. Look at *the place of this feast*; that is called *the mountain of God*, Isa. 25. 6. Else where called *a great mountain*, which excells all the mountains of the world. This mountain is the Church of God, *the pillar and ground of truth*: and it doth appear, wheresoever the ordinances of God are in power and purity.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us of God's great goodness, *Psal.* 31. 19. That he should provide such spiritual store to supply our spiritual wants, and should set out the nature of spiritual things by those sensible things which are most obvious to us, wherewith we are most affected. This Gospel-provision is set forth in Scripture by those things which are the objects of all our five senses

ſenſes: As 1. It is compared to *a pearl of great price*, which is the object of *ſeeing*, Matth. 13. 46. Pearls and Diamonds feed the eye: Sacred truths are proper and pleaſing objects to the eyes of our underſtandings. 2. It is compared to *a ſound*, to *the voice of harpers*, *Rev.* 14. 2. A melodious tune is the pleaſant object of *hearing*. Muſick delighteth a skilful ear. This Goſpel-proviſion excells all that the eye hath ſeen, or the ear hath heard, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. 3. 'Tis compared to *a garden full of fragrant flowers, and ſweet ſpices*, which is the object of *ſmelling*, *Cant.* 5. 1. The choiceſt fruits grow in gardens, but the wild grows on the waſt. Divine graces are only among Chriſtians; moral vertues may grow among Heathens. 4. It is compared unto *a marriage*, Rev. 19. 7. which is the object of *touching*. On how delightful are thoſe ſpiritual and eternal embraces, which Saints have and ſhall have in the arms of God's everlaſting mercy! 5. It is here, and in *Matth.* 22. compared to *a feaſt*, which is the object of *taſting* Theſe ſenſible ſimilitudes ſerve to convey holy truths with the more eaſe and delight, & to tell us, how ſatisfactory grace and glory is to them whoſe ſenſes are exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil, *Heb.* 5. 14.

Ingentia beneficia, ingentia flagitia, ingentia supplicia.

This sets forth the greatness of man's wickedness in refusing the Gospel-remedy. The great providing it for us, and bringing it to us, sheweth that God he is much more quick and peremptory in these days of grace, in rejecting men, saith Dr. *Preston*. The time is shorter, he will not wait so long as he was wont to do.

Distributivè quoad genera singulorum, non collectivè quoad singula generum. Prideaux.

Use 2. But though the grace of God in the Gospel be great, yet it is not uuiversal, so as to set all persons equally in a state of salvation, *Rom.* 9. 18. Where it is said, God will have all men to be saved, it is meant distributively in respect of ranks and kinds of men, not collectively in respect of the individual persons of men.

Use 3. Is there such plenty of Gospel-provision, then eat O friends, and drink abundantly, *Cant.* 5. 1. This eating is believing, *John* 6. 53, 63, 64. The phrase intimates, 1. That close union between the grace of God, and a believing soul, as between the body and the meat which is eaten. 2. That special good which the believer doth receive by the grace of God, as the body by meat. *David* sheweth what it is to taste that the Lord

Lord is good, when he presently addeth, *Blessed is the man that trusteth in him,*] Psal. 34. 8. Give heedful attendance to the means of grace, and yield conscionable obedience to the grace you hear of. We have had plentiful means of grace, so that many have been in a strait by their plenty, like guests at a full feast, that know not at which dish to reach. For this cause a great supper among the *Romans* was called a doubtful supper: but take heed of wantonness under means of grace. And consider, as the day of grace is great, so the day of judgment will be great, when you shall be called to account for your abuse of Gospel-grace.

Cœna magna cœna dubia.

CHAP. IV.

Luke 14. 16.
——*And bad many.*]

THese words shew, that the invitation is answerable to the provision forementioned. The Greek word in the Text signifyeth to *call*, but 'tis most frequently used for such

Verbum Καλέω *(unde fortasse Angl. Call) frequenter de vocatione ad convivium dicitur, unde & apud latinos simpliciter vocare est invitare ad mensam.* Novar.

such a calling as is to a feast or banquet: therefore 'tis fitly translated, bidding or inviting. The [*many*] that are here said to be invited, doth most properly belong to the time before Christs incarnation, and in special to the *Jews*, as appears by the immediate subsequent words, which refer to the time at Christ's incarnation. But the words are delivered in such large terms as exercise the bounty of the Maker of this Feast, who declared herein his willingness, that so many should partake of his supper: Not only *Jews*, but *Gentiles*, ver. 21. 23. Of which there was some fore-taste in the conversion of several *Gentiles* called Proselytes by their coming in at the call before Christ came in the flesh. Hence I note,

Obser. The invitation to partake of Gospel-provision is very large. Mnay are bidden, *Isa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 22. 1, 7. The explication of this truth will appear by an enumeration of several particular guests invited, and many considered under each of them: As

1. *Adam* was invited, and with him the whole race of mankind. He was the first man, and the Head of the following men; and the Gospel was propounded to him, *Genes.* 3. 15. That he might communicate it to them that came of him. Wherefore some make those words

words [*who will have all men saved*, 1 Tim. 2. 4.] a gloss upon the words of our Text.

2. *Noah* was invited, and with him the old world: *Noah* did partake of the grace of God in the Gospel, and those of that age had the offer of that grace by him. Christ was preached unto the old world by the ministery of *Noah*, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18, 19. who is called not only an heir of righteousness, but also *a preacher of righteousness*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. Those disobedient wretches in that loose age were called upon by *Noah* from God to believe and repent.

3. *Abraham* was invited, and with him the whole Nation of the *Jews*, who came of his loins, *Gen.* 12. 1. & 17. 1. he receiving the seal of this Gospel-righteousness in his uncircumcision, he became the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, *Rom.* 4. 11. which extendeth to the good of believers in any Nation. But for a long time the Gospel was confined within *Abraham's* family, and *Abraham's* posterity according to the flesh.

4. *Moses* was invited, and with him the *Jews* had a fresh invitation under that pædagogy, of his, which was to bring them to Christ, *Act.* 7. 31, 32. *Salmeron* on this Parable in *Luke*, will have the words of our Text with special-

ty to refer unto the invitation of the *Jews* under *Moses* his pædagogy, which was to lead unto Christ.

Sect. 2.

This truth likewise may be explained by an enumeration of those several particular ways wherein this invitation is made. As the guests are many, so the manner of inviting them in the several ages of the world is manifold, *Heb.* 1. 1. As

Ἔσωθε θεὸς πολλῶν τρόπων. Epipha.

1. In the way of *a promise*: and it is to be noted, that the first promise for the good of God's Church, is concerning the person of Christ, who is the substance of Gospel-provision, *Gen.* 3. 15. In this grand promise all the other promises which are great and precious do concenter.

2. In the way of *a type* in *Noah*'s time: the Ark which he built, was a figure or type of Christ. As out of the Ark was no temporal preservation, so out of Christ is no eternal salvation. Every straok which *Noah* struck was as a voice to the old world to look well to the securing of themselves.

3. In the way of *a covenant* in *Abrahams* time, *Gen.* 17. 7, 11. *Rom.* 4. 11. This covenant is dispensed in a two-fold manner: first singly, as

as it is propounded to man-kind. If ye will believe and repent, ye shall be saved: then doubly, as it is propounded to the elect. Thus, not only if you will believe and repent, ye shall be saved: but *I will give you a new heart*, so that you shall believe and repent, and shall be saved, *Jer.* 31.33. Thus God undertakes for both parts, and so it becometh an everlasting covenant, containnig the sure mercies of *David*.

4. In the way of *a law* in *Moses* his time. The institution of the ceremonial law, what was it but the representation of the Gospel, though indeed but as a rough draught compared with that polished form thereof, set out by Christs coming in flesh. That the Gospel was in those ceremonies, will appear by considering these particulars about the Gospel: As

1. The Gospel in *the nature of it*, as it contains the good news of the pardon of our sins, and our peace with God: This was held forth in the mercy-seat, where God gave that people a meeting, *Exod.* 25. 22. Communing with them as a reconciled father; removing their sins, which set them at such a distance from him; that they could not draw nigh.

2. The Gospel in *the cause of it*: the bloud of

of Christ procuring, or purchasing our peace with God. This was held forth in the several sacrifices, *Heb.*9.23. Christ was slain typically and vertually in those days.

3. The Gospel in *the effect of it*, as it procureth man's salvation. This was held forth in the holy of holies; *Heb.*10.19, 20. into which Jesus Christ is entred as our fore-runner.

4. The Gospel in *the ministery of it*, as it is preached by those appointed thereunto of God, making it their work. This was held forth by those who ministred about holy things, waiting at the Altar, and living thereon, 1 *Cor.* 9.13. So for the Sacraments administred by a Gospel ministery, they were held forth in circumcision and the Passeover.

5. In the way of *prediction* in the Prophets time: how plainly doth *Isaiah* fore-tell this Gospel-provision, *Chap.* 53. & 55. So the other Prophets.

6. In the way of *promulgation*, or *proclamation* in *John Baptist*'s time, *Matth.*3.1, 2,3. and since his time by the preachers of the Gospel. In which way there is an invitation of men unto Gospel-provision. 1. *Objectively*] the good things of the Gospel as they are set down in the holy Scriptures, having the vertue of a call. 2. *Formally*] as those good things are ex-

explained, and we preſſed to receive them *viva voce.*

CHAP. V.

Uſe 1, THis informs us of God's willingneſs unto man's happineſs, God doth not only propound a way for man to be happy, but invites man to accept of it: And he doth further declare & proteſt, that he had rather men ſhould live than die, he had rather they ſhould be ſaved than damned, *Ezek.* 33.11. God is no hard Maſter, no churliſh *Nabal*, who was unwilling *David* and his company ſhould partake of his plentiful proviſion in their ſtreights: but he is as the bountiful houſe-keeper that keeps open houſe.

Here alſo take notice of man's inexcuſableneſs, in not making uſe of Goſpel-proviſion; how ill may God take it? and how ill will any be able to anſwer it, when they will not vouchſafe to come upon God's invitation? what is this but to make light of that great proviſion which God hath prepared, *Matth.* 22.5. Not regarding the offers of grace? what ill natures are thoſe upon whom no kindneſs can be faſtened? like him in the Poet, who would by no means live happily.

ut vivat regnetq; beatus, cogi poſſe negat. Horat. Epiſt. 2.

Uſe 2.

Use 2. Of *Caution* 1. Though men are thus generally invited, yet other fallen creatures (as the Angels) they have not so much as an invitation: so that there is somewhat of distinguishing mercy in the very invitation. Christ took not upon him the nature of Angels, to recover them that were lost of those kind of creatures, *Heb.* 2. 16. not one of them are invited among the many guests at this feast.

2. Though men are thus generally invited, yet they are very hardly perswaded really to close with the invitation. Though many are called, yet few are chosen, *Matth.* 22. 14. Outward priviledges profit not, where the hidden man of the heart is not right: a form without the power of godliness is nothing. Many a ship hath been called by the name of Safe-guard, Good-speed, and such like specious names, which yet have been split upon the rocks, or fallen into the sands.

Res delicata est spiritus dei, ita nos tractat, sicut tractatur.

3. Though men are thus generally invited, yet they will not be continually invited: God is not always suffering, though he be *long-suffering*, his spirit shall not always strive with our flesh, *Gen.* 6. 3. 'Tis dangerous to tempt, resist, or quench the spirit

rit of God. When you often invite guests to your table, and they slight your invitation, you will resolve to invite such no more.

4. Though men are thus generally invited, yet they will be as generally rejected, if they continue slighting God's invitation. Here many are bidden to partake of grace in the Gospel: elsewhere many are forbidden to partake of glory in heaven; and that for their contempt of Gospel-grace, *Matth.*7.22,23. Sometimes God lays remarkable judgments here on Cospel-contemners: witness the Nation of the *Jews*, Matth. 22.7. but their posterity shall be re-invited: and it will prove effectual through the grace of God prevailing with their hearts, *Rom.*11.32.

CHAP. VI.

Use 3. BE exhorted to hearken to this call and invitation of God, *Mark*4.3. *Isa.*55.1,2,3. hearken, or listen, as they do in a Court of Justice to hear when their own cause is to be handled. Remember, that every word which is spoken in a Sermon to every one of you, is as it were the handling of your particular cause, the resolving or deciding your particular case.

Jam tua res agitur.

An-

Anſwer ye this loving invitation with a ready acceptation, let your hearts eccho back the ſound of the Goſpel, *Pſal.* 27. 8. with ſincere obedience to the voice of the Goſpel. The proof of this effectual call doth thus appear.

1. By the ſervice we are employed about different from others. This calling denoteth the ſetting a man apart unto what he is called; ſo that he doth not live as he did before, but mind's the buſineſs to which he is called. We ſee it in worldly callings; men are ſet apart for the ſame, and give themſelves to the ſame. *Paul* was ſeparated unto the Goſpel, or ſet apart to the particular calling of an Apoſtle. Thus Saints are ſet apart to the general calling of Chriſtianity, to ſpend their time in godlineſs, *Pſal.* 4. 3. diſtinct from the practice of the profane, or meer civil men.

2. By the ſpiritual aſſiſtance we have to do that ſervice God calls us unto: God calls none to an employment, but he qualifies them (more or leſs) to diſcharge it. God calls none to any particular calling in Church or State, but he gifteth them for it. When God called *Saul* to be King, he put into him *another ſpirit*, ſutable to the condition whereunto he was called. So when God calleth any to his kingdom and glory, he giveth them a ſpirit which

which aspireth and endeavoureth to that prize of this their high calling in Christ Jesus.

3. By our deportment answerable to the nature of the calling which God hath called us to, *Eph.*4. 1,2. Every man is to look to the τὸ πρέπον or *quod Placet*, in his place or calling. Those actions are beseeming a child, which do not become an old man: Men of better breeding have a sutable deportment; so have Saints.

4. By our abiding in that calling unto which God hath called us, *Luke* 9. 62. Those that are come into a state of grace, do go on till they come to glory. Now to move you to accept of God's gracious invitation: Consider seriously

1. God communes with us in a way of *familiarity*, Isa.1. 18. What an honour did *Haman* account it that Queen *Esther* should invite him to a banquet with the King? *Est.* 5.12. how much more may we look upon this in the Text.

2. God commands us in a way of *authority*, 1 John 3.23. It is his will and pleasure that we should embrace this call.

3. God doth beseech us in a way of *entreaty*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. He wooes us to be happy.

4. Upon

Quod deus loquitur cum risu, tu legas cum fletu.

4. Upon refusal God threatens us in a way of *severity*, Prov. 1. 24, 32. They who will not feed upon these Gospel-dainties, *shall eat of the fruit of their own ways*. They that sow the wind of iniquity, shall reap the whirlwind of misery.

SERM. IV.

Luke 14. 17.

And sent his servant at Supper time, to say to them that were bidden, Come for all things are now ready.

CHAP. I.

Est in more illud apud nonnulles habitum, ut qui invitati sunt ad prandium, sive ad cœnam sub ipsum tempus cœnæ instantis vel imminentis prandii iterum evocentur. Salmer. in loc.

HEre is the renewing of the motion made in the former verse. The language of this verse alludeth to the manner of those who send out a servant when the Din-

Dinner or Supper is ready, to give out a fresh summons to the guests, whom they did invite, that the provision may not be spoiled, but serv'd in with much sweetness and delight unto them, for whom it was prepared. *The servant* here sent, may be taken diversly, though not contrarily, either for the last of the old Prophets, not excluding those that went before, or for the first of the new Prophets, *John Baptist*, *Mal.* 4. 5. *Matth.* 11. 10. not excluding those that followed after: or else for the great Prophet and servant of God, *Christ*. The time when this servant was sent, called here, *Supper-time*.] Doth specially point at the accomplishment of the great work of man's Redemption, through the incarnation of Christ dying and rising again in that humane nature which he assumed. Before I descend into the particulars of this verse, I shall observe one thing as this verse is joyned to the former, and containeth a second invitation.

Sect. 1.

Obser. God is very urgent with men to accept of Gospel-provision for the good of their souls: he speaks once and again, *Jer.* 7. 25. This truth will thus appear.

I. By the several acts of God put forth in Gospel-provision for mans salvation.

God's kingdom is not *partum*, but *paratum*.

1. He hath prepared the provision without any desert or desire of ours, *Tit.* 3.4,5. It is all according to his mercy: he hath spared no cost in the recovering of fallen man; he hath freely parted with the bloud of his only Son to redeem the souls of slaves and Rebels.

2. The means of grace is vouchsafed to many that do not improve the same, *Matth.* 11. 16, 17, 21. Some, whether piped to, or mourned to, are nothing affected; neither the Preacher, nor the Doctrine regarded: they are not awed with threatnings, nor allured with promises.

Prævenit voluntati ut inclinet.

3. God propounds a way, and offers help to do us good, before we enquire after it, *Isa.* 65. 1. Every motion towards God is an influence from God. We are prevented of God, we do not prevent God's grace, as the Pelagians fondly conceit.

4. God forbears his wrath, when we do not presently close with his mercy: he stays, though man lingers; he waits to be gracious; he meets with many unworthy passages from man. His native goodness discovers it self in his patience, when our native sin discovers it self in our provocations. 5. God

5. God reproves where we are defective, and happy are the wounds of such a friend: He which first reproveth, is unwilling to punish. That man is in ill case when no man dares speak to him; and it is worst of all, when God saith to any, *let him alone*, Hos. 4. 17.

6. God stops our way, when we are running head-long to our own misery: he will not suffer us to act according to our corrupt desires, he hedge hup our ways with thorns, *Hos.* 2. 6. God many times keeps us short, that he may kep us humble.

7. God makes us to consider our ways, and recollect our thoughts, whither our course tendeth, *Hag.* 1. 5. Whiles men walk heedlesly, they walk dangerously. Hence are those frequent phrases, *Hear and give ear*: as if God should say, Hearken, do ye know what ye do, or what will be the fruit of these courses you take?

8. God worketh irresistible upon us notwithstanding our obstinacy, by a sweet and holy violence perswading us, *Luke* 14. 23. He doth not only stop our way, but changeth our wills. When God's elect come to heaven, surely (saith one) their first thoughts will be like those of the *Israelites*, wondring how they past the sea with safety, and so many

Egyptians drowned. The discriminating grace of God is one of the most unaccountable things of the world.

Sect. 2.

II. By the manner of God's speaking to sinners in the holy Scriptures.

1. By way of *interrogation*, why will ye die? *Ezek* 18.31. God in a friendly manner expostulates with men, why will ye be damned? why will ye venture your selves any longer in a natural estate, in which condition if you should die presently, you must certainly perish eternally.

2. By way of *lamentation*: God puts on the bowels of a man, nay God in the second person of the sacred Trinity, puts on the nature of man, that he might not only suffer for man, but sympathize with man: and how affectionately doth he exercise that sympathizing property of our nature towards sinners? *Luke* 19. 41, 42. weeping for obstinate sinners?

3. By way of *protestation* with the strongest asseveration. *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*, Ezek. 33. 11. Oaths are added to words in Scripture for confirmation, not of God's truth: (the bare propounding of it is sufficient) but for the confirming of our faith.

4. By

4. By way of *ingemination. Turn ye, Turn ye from your evil ways*, Ezek. 33. 11.

CHAP. II.

Use 1. THIS informs us that the destruction of man is a thing displeasing to God; *Ezek.* 33. 11. He takes pleasure in man's conversion and salvation, as appeareth by the means he hath provided for man's good, comparing it to things of the greatest efficacy: calling his word *mustard seed, leaven, a sword, a hammer, fire, &c.* As likewise by internal means: The motions of his spirit knocking at the doors of mens hearts, and opening them in some measure by convictions, when he goes no further. This appears likewise by the hatred God expresseth against man's destroying enemy, *Sin*: he is not the Author or Abettor of it, but the great opposer of it.

Object. But if God take no pleasure in the destruction of a sinner, why then is he said to laugh at it? *Prov.* 1. 26.

Resp. Consider destruction meerly as the sinner's misery, so 'tis displeasing to God; but consider it as it is an act of justice in punishing the wicked for his impenitency, so it is well-pleasing to God, for he is just as

well as merciful. A just Judge may grieve to inflict punishment upon a man, and yet rejoyce in the same act as it is the execution of the Law.

Here we may see that man's ruine is not to be charged upon God's unkindness, but upon his own untowardness. Man since his fall is apt to charge God with the inequality of his ways, when this charge is justly laid at mans door, *Ezek.* 18. 29. This quarrel may be easily decided, if we consider these things.

Et ipse se infinitis miscuit quæstionibus, Vulg.

1. *The Case*; God is man's maker; he made him streight: man made himself crooked, *Eccles.* 7. 29. Man might have kept his station, but he sought out many inventions, tricks, and devices, like Poetical stories; of which there is neither proof nor profit. Men puzzle themselves, then do they complain of others.

2. Consider *the interest* on both sides: God could make something of man's bad bargain; but man could make nothing of it: God can glorifie his justice by this means: God need not lose his glory, though men lose their souls.

3. *The carriage* of both parties: God minds man's recovery more than himself mind-

mindeth it: he would gather men in a tender manner to himself, and they in a cruel manner refuse his good will, *Matth.* 23. 37.

CHAP. III.

Use 2. BUt though God be thus urgent about the salvation of man, yet he is quick and peremptory in the destruction of many: God's judgments come in a flying roll, and there be those who bring upon themselves swift destruction, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. And though God seem to come slowly to punish man, yet his hand will fall heavily upon those that abuse his patience.

Use 3. Answer Gods urgency with you to accept of Gospel-provision.

1. Be urgent with your own hearts to turn to the Lord by faith: and then be as urgent to bless his name for turning them.

2. Urge your hearts to turn from all sin by true repentance, to cast away from you all your transgressions, *Ezek.* 18. 31. break off your union with sin: loath that sin which you break off from by repentance, and your selves for it; and cast it away as unprofitable, useless, hurtful, dangerous.

Mot. 1. Consider, that the means of grace requires you should offer violence to heaven,

Matth. 11. 12. resolve to break through all difficulties as did *Davids* Worthies: heaven must be taken as it were by storm.

2. Consider how urgent some will be for heaven when it is too late, knocking at the door, and pressing argument upon argument, but all to no purpose, *Luke* 13. 25, 26, 27. a form of godliness will not secure men from God's wrath at the great day. There must be stirring as well as seeking; the exercise of grace, as well as the performance of duty.

CHAP. IV.

And sent his servant, &c.]

WE are now to consider the several particulars in the verse, and the first thing considerable is the Master of the feast sending his servant, alluding to the custom of the higher rank of persons in the world, who have their houshold servants at command, to send at their pleasure upon particular errands *And sent*] The Greek word signifies to send with authority and discretion— *His servant.*] This word

Ἀποστέλλω significat mittere cum authoritate Chamier. *Cursum navis dirigere.* Jansen. *Est plus quam πέμπω* Cornel. *a lapide. Hinc* Ἀπόστολος.

word is taken in Scripture in a three-fold sense. 1. For a bond-man. 2. More generally for all the faithful. 3. More specially for the Ministers of the Church, or Messengers of God about sacred things. In this verse it is taken in the last sense. And it may further be taken.

1. Collectively for all the Prophets, especially those toward Christ's coming into his Temple. *Marlorat in loc. Annot. Bibl.*

All the holy Prophets spake as by one mouth, *Luke* 1.70. and that which St. *Luke* puts in the singular number, St. *Matthew* puts in the plural number, *Matth.* 22.3.

2. Singly, and that by way of eminency for Christ himself, God's choice servant: as in that other Parable, last of all he sent unto them his son, *Matth.* 21. 37. Though perhaps there may be some specialty in reference to *John Baptist*, the immediate forerunner of Christ. I shall take in both senses in the observation, for they are not contrary to, but consistent one with the other.

CHAP. V.

Observ. CHrist and his messengers are the servants of God sent out for the good

good of souls, *Matth.* 21. 35, 36, 37.

Christ is the servant of God.

I. As *mediatour*. Thus he is that righteous servant of God, who justifies many by bearing their iniquities, *Isa.*53.11. a servant voluntarily subjecting himself to his father for the good of all the elect, *Matth.*20. 28. Yea a covenanting servant, engaging himself by way of compact to transact such a work as his father set him about.

A Righteous servant.

1. In reference to the *purity* in his nature, being without any act or taint of sin, and so fit to be a sacrifice for the sins of others, *Heb.* 7.26. perfectly righteous, his will being exactly framed to the will of his father.

2. In reference to his *fidelity* in his office; he was faithful to him that appointed him, as *Moses*, *Heb.*3.2. and that not as an ordinary servant, or no more than a servant, but as a most eminent servant, and more than a servant: *A son* ver.5. 6. though he act according to his father's will, yet he acteth all according to his own will and appointment.

II. As man he took upon him *the form of a servant*, being made in the likeness of man, *Phil.* 2. 7. and became obedient to the death, that is to his dying day, saith *Beza*:

Beza in Phil.

Beza: he went through many a death all his life long. Moreover, as a servant he did not disdain to do the meanest office, to wash his Disciples feet. And for his particular calling, he was a Minister, or Preacher of the Gospel, *Luke* 4.18.

Christ was sent, that is

1. He was empowered with authority from the father, *Matth.* 11. 27. Christ is the father's plenipotentiary, and privy counsellour. He is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. The father hath committed salvation and judgment into his hand: he hath made him both Saviour and Judge of the world, *John* 5.26, 27. *Him hath God the father sealed*, John 6. 27. God hath commissionated him with full power to save whom he will.

2. He was endued with gifts from the spirit, not by measure, but in a supperabounding manner, *John* 3.34. The spirit of God did in a special manner appear about Christ's manhood in the framing his body, *Luke* 1.35. and in the furnishing of his soul with all requisite qualities, which did appear with proportionable encrease according to the growth of his body, *Luke* 1.80.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

THe messengers, or ministers of Christ are the servants of God also, which is thus evident.

1. He sets them about his work; therefore they are called *men of God*: their employment being altogether about the word of God, 2 *Tim.* 3, 16, 17. clearly to explain, and faithfully to apply it. What they are to deliver unto others, they are to receive from the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. They are not only employ'd about sacred things in the general calling of Christianity, but in the particular calling of the ministery.

2. He pays them their wages; and that with the enjoyment of himself who is their Master, *Matth.* 25. 20. *Matth.* 24. 46.

These servants of God are sent.

1. In respect of their *qualification* for the work; being filled with gifts answerable to that weighty employment, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25. endued with wisdom, courage, patience, utterance, *&c.* that may make them able Ministers of the new Testament.

2. In respect of their *acceptation* to the work, *Isa.* 6. 8. a man must be willing to take it upon him.

3. In

3. In respect of their *commission* to the work, set apart thereunto, *Act.* 14. 23. 'Tis not every one that hath good legs, or that can run, that is a messenger: he must be likewise *sent*. 'Tis not every one that hath good abilities of knowledge, courage, wisdom, elocution, is either a Commander in war, or an Embassadour of state: he must be likewise commissionated. 'Tis a great errour to think, that all the Lord's people are ministerially Prophets.

In physicis aer non facit seipsum ignem sed fit a superiori. Aquin. in loc.

4. In respect of their *continuation* in the work, *Act.* 6. 4. Those that have set their hands to this plough, must not look back. No other impediment than that which hinders them from the execution of their office, must give way to them to lay down their office.

CHAP. VII.

Use 1. HEre see the condescension and humility of Christ; he made choice of the lowest kind of life, even that of a servant, and the lowest kind of death, that of the Cross, when he was among the children of men, *Phil.* 2. 7, 8. he emptyed himself, suspended, Ἐκένωσεν,

and

and as it were laid aside his glory and majesty. Yea 'tis said, *God sent his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh*, Rom. 8. 3. Though his flesh was not sinful, yet he was just like to sinful flesh. As to imputation in respect of God, who laid upon him the iniquity of us all, *Isa.* 53. 6. and as to reputation, in respect of men, he was reputed a sinner, being reckoned among the transgressors, *ver.* 12.

This may also inform us of the exaltation of ministers, they are servants, but, of the Lord: and this title they may glory in, *Jud.* 1. *Jude* might have called himself a near Kinsman to Christ, or Christ's brother, for he was so accounted, *Matth.* 13. 55. *Mark* 6. 3. and he was so as much as *James*, who is called *the Lord's brother*, Gal. 1. 19. but surely alliance to Christ in the service of the Gospel, is better than alliance to him in the flesh. To be a faithful minister of Christ, or true believer on Christ, is more honour than to be a natural brother of Christ.

Servi sunt imo homines, imo contubernales, imo humiles amici, imo conservi. Sen. Epist. 47.

Here also take notice of the condition of servants: though their calling be low in the world, yet 'tis as lawful as any other worldly calling, and very useful, else Christ would never have taken upon

upon him *the form of a servant*. Therefore servants should be respected for their usefulness, *Col.* 4. 1. *Philem. v.* 16. *Seneca* hath a pretty Epistle to perswade his friend to respect his servants, and not to carry himself severely and rigidly, but familiarly towards them. Surely, 'tis your wisdom, so to carry your selves towards your servants, that they may not only fear you, but love you. And let servants be contented in the places wherein God sets them: for if Christ could, then a Christian may do God and men good service in the form of a servant.

Here also you may see God's indulgence to man, as to send so many servants for his good, and among the rest his son for one, *Luke* 20. 10,11,12,13. Lord! what is man, that thou shouldest be thus mindful of him?

Use 2. Four things are to be noted by way of Caution.

1. Though Christ be God's servant, yet he is his *Fellow*: so God doth call him. *The man which is my fellow*, Zech. 13. 7. not a secondary inferiour God, as the *Arrians* would have him, denying him to be true God: God calls him so (saith one) to shew the unity of the essence, and unity of the will of the father, and of the son, the mediator: *Diodat in loc.*

Christ

Christ did account it to be no robbing of his fathers honour to be equal with God, *Phil.* 2.6. The same he is in nature, and in working, and all are bound to honour the son as they honour the father, *John* 5.23.

2. Though Christ be the servant of God, yet he is Lord of the Church, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5. appointing laws to govern it as he pleaseth. Yea, he is Lord of all creatures, both of the dead and of the living, *Rom.* 14.9. he is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. A name is given him above all names: he is the great God and our Saviour.

3. Though ministers are the servants of God, yet they are not the servants of men, but only for God's sake, doing service for the good of souls, 2 *Cor.* 4.5. They are servants for the people, not of the people. It is observed by the Judicious, that ministers are called *Ministers of God*, 2 Cor. 6. 4. *Ministers of Christ*, 1 Cor. 4.1. *ministers of the new Testament*, 2 Cor. 3. 6. *ministers of the Gospel*, 1 Thes. 3.2. *ministers of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 21. but never ministers of the people.

4. Though ministers are servants of God, yet they are no ordinary servants. They are as stewards to a Lord, or Embassadours to a Prince, 1 *Cor.* 4.1. 2 *Cor.* 5.20. Yea they are said to be labourers together with God, 1 *Cor.* 3.9.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Use 3. BE therefore exhorted to these duties.

1. To answer the labours of these servants of God: *yield up your selves to God, as his servants*, Rom. 6. 16. Come into his houshold, give up your names to him.

2. Live as the servants of God. To serve God, is the great duty we are still prest to: this is the beaten road that all Saints walk in, and that all men should walk in. Here look,

1. To the essential requisits of this service: it must be 1. From God; it is of the very essence of a duty, that it be commanded of God: in all duties there must be an eye to the will of God, *Rom.* 12.2. 2. It must be through God, that is, through the spirit enabling us to perform this service, *Rom.* 1. 9. and through the son presenting our service, that it find acceptance with God, *Col.* 3. 17. 3. To God, to set forth his glory, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31.

2. Look to the material properties of this service.

1. Serve God *singly*, or solely, *Matth.* 6. 24. not any other in opposition unto him: here let all Masters of families especially con-

consider, that all under their roof do serve this one God, *Jos.* 24.15.

2. *Reverently*, Psal. 2. 11. Stand in aw of him, honour him with your very heart.

3. *Delightfully*, Rom. 7. 22. You like not a servant that goes about his work grudgingly; no more doth God.

4. *Diligently*; be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, *Rom.* 12. 11. and instantly serving God day and night.

To move you to this service, consider

1. It is *pleasant*, Prov. 3. 17. there is freedom in this service, there is wages in this work.

2. 'Tis *profitable*. The works of Saints follow them, *Rev.* 14. 13. their good service shall be had in everlasting remembrance.

Sumus domini, non tantum in genitivo singulari, sed in nominativo plurali. Luther.

3. 'Tis *honourable*. To serve Christ is to reign. 'Tis more honour to serve Christ, than to serve the greatest Emperour, or to have great Princes to serve us. *Theodosius* counted it a greater honor, that he was a member of Christ's Church, than that he was Head of the Empire. Oh how will God's servants be honoured at the great day!

SECT.

SERM. V.

LUKE 14. 17.

And sent his servant at Supper time, &c.

CHAP. I.

WE are now to consider the time when the servant was sent, *viz. at Supper time.*] The Greek word, here translated *Time*, doth properly signifie *an hour*. In holy Scripture it is used for *time*, for *an age*, for *a moment*, for *the opportunity of time*, *Joh.* 16. 2. *Joh.* 12.18. *Luke* 12.12. *Rev.* 9.15. it signifyeth likewise *beauty*. So the Adjective of this Substantive is used, *Rom.* 10. 15. how beautiful? or how seasonable? That being beautiful which is timely, opportunely, or seasonably. So it is with the Gospel dispensed: and this is the sense of the word in our Text.

Ὥρα, *hinc latinè hora, &* Angl. Hour.

Hora cœnæ fuit plenitudo temporis, &c. Salmer.

This hour of supper is that fulness, fitness, or seasonableness of time, wherein God sent his son into the world, to accomplish that great work of mans Redemption: or the last time, or latter ages of the world, which were come in the Apostles days, compared with the fore-going time: after which no more alteration in Gospel-dispensation was to be expected: This supper time being the last meal. Hence I note,

Observ. That Christ's coming into the world was very seasonable. 'Twas supper time for Gospel-provision: the fulness of time, the very nick of time for man's Redemption, *Gal.* 4 4. This may appear

Nos sumus in quos fines seculorum devenerunt. In hoc fine servus mittitur. Gloss. Ordin.

I. By considering the time when he came into the world. 'Twas under the reign of *Augustus Cesar*, the second *Roman* Emperour, who then had the *Jews* (among other Nations) under his power, *Luke* 2. And he was crucified under the reign of *Tiberius Cesar*, the third *Roman* Emperour, *Pontius Pilate* being governour of *Judea*, Luke 3. This was the remarkable juncture of time, of our Saviour's coming in, and going out of the world, about 1600 years

years and upwards from our time, according to the ordinary computation of Chronologers.

II. By comparing several accidents with this time.

1. In respect of the accomplishment of Prophesies: as that prophesie in *Gen.* 49. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah*, &c. *until Shiloh come.* The right of supream power, & administration of justice in temporal dominion, should not be quite taken away from *Judah*, until the *Messias* came, who should be of *Judah's* posterity, and change it into a spiritual and everlasting kingdom, destroying a little while after by means of the *Romans*, both the people and form of any Jewish common-wealth. Till Christ came, *Judah* always had the right, and kept some reliques of the possession in their greatest captivity, having the body of its common-wealth several, with its divine and humane laws. And when Christ came, his spiritual kingdom was over all people; was not this opportune and seasonable? many other Prophesies also might be lookt upon.

2. In respect of the truth and substance of these figures and shadows in the legal ceremonies. When Christ came into the world, he was fitted with such a body, as was meet to

be a real sin-offering, to answer all the typical sin-offerings of old, *Heb.* 10. 5. A body of man's nature, yet without man's corruption; a body made of a woman without the help of a man: a body joyned with the deity, and to be an expiatory sacrifice for sin. He was fitted with a name answerable, called *the Lamb of God*, John 1. 29. the true Paschal Lamb, yea he was fitted with a spirit answerable, most desirous to give himself a sacrifice for sin, *Lo I come, lo I come*, Heb. 10. 7. 9. he was straitned with desire till the baptism of his sufferings was accomplished.

3. In respect of the expectation of God's dear children, who in the days of Christ's coming were earnestly waiting for the consolation of *Israel* through the coming of the *Messias*; Witness *Simeon*, Luke 2. 25. and *Anna*. ver. 36. 37. This was the sugar by which they sweetned all their crosses in those dark times: when a friend cometh, that hath been long lookt for, how seasonable and welcome is his coming? especially when we suffer much by his absence, and enjoy much by his presence.

4. In respect of the conversion of the *Gentiles* to be added to the believing *Jews*, or to come in the room of the obstinate *Jews*, who would have none of this Gospel-provision.

The

The fields were white unto harvest, when Christ came, *John* 4. 35. The several nations of the world were ready to receive the Gospel upon the tender of it to them; they being as it were at leisure, or ready to hear; for 'tis observable, when Christ the Prince of peace came to preach the Gospel of peace, there was in that age generally either a peace, or truce throughout the nations of the earth: So *Florus* observeth, that writeth the History of that time. How seasonably did Christ come in this time of publick quietness to reason with men in a calm manner about their souls?

Cuncta atq; continua totius generis humani aut pax fuit, aut pactio. Flor. hist. lib. 4.

5. In respect of Christ's herauld, or immediate fore-runner, *John Baptist* coming in the spirit of *Elias*, Luke 1. 17.

6. In respect of the institution of Gospel-ordinances in the room of the legal. When the ceremonial service appeared an intolerable yoke, *Act.* 15. 10. then Christ cometh, who instituted baptism instead of circumcision, and the Lord's Supper instead of the Passeover, *Matth.* 26. 26.

Quest. *But here it may be demanded, why a supper?*

Resp. It fitly answers to the word [*Supper*] in the Text, which expresseth the grace of God in the Gospel.

1. The Supper-meal is the sweet meal, in regard of the work of the fore-going day which is past, and the rest of the succeeding night which is to come. This may refer to the hard service of the ceremonial law past, and to the sweet powrings forth of the spirit to come at this supper time.

2. 'Tis the last meal; the last mess of the Gospel serv'd in, not another Christ to come. Now God would have us methodical in the use of means, first to close by faith with Gospel-provision in the word preached, *Rom.* 1. 16. and when the word preached hath had its due work, then to partake of the Lord's supper.

CHAP. II.

Use 1. HEre see the manifold wisdom of God in the dispensation of Gospel-provision, *Eph.* 3. 10. how seasonable was the time of the Gospel's discovery in the clearness or brightness of it? when the day-star appeareth, the Sun is at hand; so before Christ's nativity a star appeared; whence the wise men concluded, that the Sun of Righteousness was rising.

Here also observe, that we have one priviledge above them who lived before Christ came in the flesh: they had the dawning of the

the morning, but we the light at noon-day, *Col.* 1.26. They had the Parable, we the interpretation of it. The Gospel was once confined to one Country, the Land of *Judea*, but now the Commission is to preach it in every Country, to every creature, *Mark* 16. 15. And generally believers in the new Testament have a greater measure of grace than those in the old Testament. There have been more plentiful effusions of the spirit since Christ came in the flesh, *Joh.* 7.39.

Use 2. For caution: This doth not make but that many before Christ came in the flesh did partake of this Gospel-provision, and went to heaven in the strength of this food. Witness those many worthies, *Heb.* 11. in all ages of the world, who lived and died in the faith of Jesus. Christ, the true *Messias*. So 1 *Cor.* 10.3. *Rom.* 4.11.

Use 3. Be exhorted to answer the time of Christ's seasonable coming by knowing the time or season of our salvation, *Rom.* 13. 11. The Apostle calls upon us, as men upon their servants to go about their work, because the Sun is up. Now is the accepted time, 2 *Cor.* 6.2. Christ counselleth you to improve this time, now ye may be accepted, *John* 12. 35. 36. 'Tis very sad if you do not, *Luke* 19.42.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

To say to them that were bidden, &c.]

THese words contain the manner or way, how, or wherein the Gospel-errand is to be delivered, and that's by word of mouth. The servant sent was *Prædicator*; to say, is *Prædicare*. The servant here sent is not as an ordinary messenger to carry a Letter, but as an extraordinary officer of state appointed, an Embassadour commissionated to treat with others; such is the dispensation of the Gospel in the ministry thereof. Hence I observe

Obser. That the word spoken by the ministry of men appointed thereunto, is the way which God useth to save men. This is the usual way of propounding Gospel-invitations, the real acceptance whereof tends to salvation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 23, 25.

Sect. 1.

Quest. 1. *What is meant by the word, which is to be spoken or said unto people for their souls good?*

Resp. 'Tis the revealed will of God, fully made known in the holy Scriptures for man's eternal good: those writings being inspired of

of God for matter and words: the perfect distribution of which is set forth by the Apostle, 2 *Tim.* 3.16. profitable

1. For *doctrine*; containing all things needful to be known, or believed, in reference to our salvation: as the Doctrine of our innocence, of our fall, of our recovery. There is not a syllable of this in any of the Volums of the Heathens, *Psal.* 147. 20. These things are revealed only by the Scripture.

2. For *reproof*; to confute all those false Doctrines, which oppose the true. Truth discovereth, and confoundeth errour, *Isa.* 8.20.

3. For *correction*; to reprehend the vices and ill manners of those that walk contrary to this word.

4. For *instruction*; to direct us to lead our lives according to this word. And all this must be (as is added) in righteousness: and it must be so, seeing this word is the truth, 1 *Pet.* 1.22. which cannot justily be contradicted.

Sect. 2.

Quest. 2. *How must this word be spoken?*

Resp. I. If we look at God from whom 'tis spoken, it must be spoken

1. *Exactly*, according to his mind: what we

we deliver to others, must be received from him, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. Ministers must learn as well as teach, hear before they speak, *Ezek.* 3. 17. what the Prophets and Apostles had immediatly, Ministers now have mediately.

2. *Reverently*, as in his sight, 2 *Cor.* 5. 11. before whose dreadful tribunal both speakers and hearers must one day appear.

3. *Authoritatively*, as in his stead, 2 *Cor.* 5. 20. as Writs and Warrants run in the name of the supream power: so must the word preached in the name of God.

II. If we look at the word which is spoken, it must be spoken

1. *Gravely*; according to the weight of the matter, and majesty of the stile. There should not be an affected language, but sober expressions subservient to the matter.

2. *Methodically*; according to the distinct heads of divinity held forth in the Scripture, 1 *Cor.* 15. 3.

3. *Pertinently*; according to the particular portion of Scripture which is fixt upon, keeping to the matter in hand, as St. *Paul* doth in the confirmation of the Resurrection. A man may speak according to truth, or the word in general, when he doth not speak according to his Text, or the Scripture which he quoteth.

III. If

III. If we consider by whom the word is spoken, it must be spoken

1. *Understandingly*; and that according to the analogy, or proportion of faith.

2. *Resolvedly*; in an open and free manner, boldly declaring the word of God, 2 *Cor.* 4.13. *Rom.*1.16. being ready to defend what we deliver.

3. *Affectionately*, Phil. 3.18. our Sermons should not only be informing, but enflaming: affectionate speeches help much to work upon affection, and they seem to flow from affection.

IV. If we look at those to whom the word is spoken, it must be spoken

1. *Audibly*; with the voice so lift up, as the standers by may take it, *John* 7.37. the lungs are of use, as well as the brains in the ministerial employment.

2. *Plainly*, 2 Cor. 3.12. speaking in a familiar speech; not uttering fine phrases like painted glasses, which makes a shew, but keeps out the light: we must speak to the capacity of all sorts of hearers. The learned can understand plain words, but the unlearned cannot understand elegant words. 'Tis best there-

Qui pueriliter, populariter, trivialiter, & simplicissimè docent optimi ad vulgus sunt concionatores. Luther.

fore

fore to use those words which all know.

3. *Distinguishingly*: separating the precious from the vile, *Jer.* 15. 19. giving unto each the portion belonging to him: for this end a Minister had need observe the carriage of his people, that he may accordingly discharge his duty towards them.

Quest. 3. *How doth this appear to be the way that God makes use of?*

Resp. 1. The Scripture-rule illustrated with instances cleareth this. The Rule is, *Rom.* 10. 14, 15. The instances are, that of St. *Peter* sent to *Cornelius*, Act. 10. That of *Ananias* sent to St. *Paul*, Act. 9.

2. The daily experiences of Saints confirm this. Where is the man or woman that hath received any of the gracious workings of God's spirit, and have not received it this way?

CHAP. IV.

Use 1. THis may inform us of diverse things.

1. That the gift of utterance is very requisite for a Minister, *Eph.* 6. 19. for Ministers are spokes-men by their office. *Isaiah* was bid to lift up his voice like a Trumpet, which yieldeth a loud & a distinct sound. *John Baptist's* language was as the voice of a cryer,

Matth.

Matth. 3. 1. which is a ſtretched out voice, and an authoritative voice: yet ſhould a Miniſter take heed he be nothing but voice, an empty ſound.

2. The calling of the miniſtery is very uſeful; 'tis to beſpeak ſouls for heaven, by inviting them to accept of Goſpel-proviſion, *Tit.* 1. 2, 3. none need think it too mean a calling for their children; the honourableneſs and uſefulneſs of preaching may be eſtimated by the precioufneſs of ſouls.

3. How fooliſh are they who account preaching of a plain Sermon to be a poor way of profiting an intelligent man, in reſpect of the reading of a Learned book. And upon this account many (I fear) abſent themſelves from hearing, thinking they have a tolerable excuſe: yea ſome have been obſerved to be ſo irreverent, as to read a book in Sermon-time. But know, it is the word ſpoken, not the word written, is the ordinary way of ſalvation, the fooliſhneſs of preaching, 1 *Cor.* 1. 21. not, but that to read good books is a good exercise, if it be done in its proper time.

See Mr. *Hieron.* his preachers plea.

Uſe 2. Miniſters ſhould not only preach with their tongues, but likewiſe

Sanctiores ſunt aures plebis quam corda ſacerdotum. Hilar

with

with their hearts feelingly. The heart is the best Oratory. St. *Paul's* spirit was stirred within him to preach against the Idolatry of the *Athenians*, *Act.* 17. 16. 'Tis a sad complaint of *Hilary*, that the peoples ears were better than their Teachers hearts.

Ministers should also preach with their lives, *Phil.* 3. 17, 20. *Aristotle* saith, that a good Oratour must be a good man. There be many preachers, saith *Calvin*, very clamorous in declaiming against the sins of the people, but do no good, because the people see they are not moved themselves with what they preach to others. Christ preached often when he opened not his mouth, as *Theophilact* observes, *viz.* διὰ τοῦ βίου, καὶ θαυμάτων, by his life, and by his miracles.

Theophilact. in Mat. 5. 2.

Consider further, though preaching be the ordinary way of conversion, yet reading the Scriptures is very useful and necessary. *Junius* turn'd from Atheism to Christianity by reading the first Chapter of *John*. Christ bids us search the Scriptures, *John* 5. 39. God can also make Christian conference effectual. Moreover, it is not the breath of a man, but the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which worketh conversion: and God's spirit doth not

not tie himself to means, though he tie us, but bloweth (as the wind) where he listeth. And this spirit may breath into little children, as well as into grown men: they may have the teachings of God, though they are uncapable of the teachings of men.

CHAP. V.

Use 3. LEt us be thankful to God, that the word of faith is so nigh us in the preaching of the word, *Rom.* 10. 6, 7, 8. that Manna falls at our very doors, 'tis but stepping out, and taking it up. If *Plato* could bless the Gods, that he was not only a man, but a *Græcian* and *Athenian*, and that he lived in the days of *Socrates*: if *Bucholcerus* counted himself happy, that his birth fell out in *Melancton's* time; how may we bless God for the many helps we have to attain saving knowledge. Therefore

1. Speak to God in prayer before you come to hear, that he would bless the word to you when you do hear.

2. Diligently attend to God's word which is spoken, *Eccles.* 5. 1. Be not praying or reading when you should be hearing. Our King *Edward* VI. heard Sermons with great reverence, penned them with his own hand,

and diligently ſtudyed them afterwards? *Conſtantine* the Great in hearing the word would many times ſtand up all Sermon-while: and when ſome of his Courtiers told him, it tended to his diſparagement, he anſwered, that it was in the ſervice of the great God, who is no reſpecter of perſons.

3. Be affected with the word you hear. The word preached doth as it were repreſent truth before the eyes, *Gal.* 3.1. Thus the Prophets were to ſhew the people their ſins. The eye affects the heart. Think while you are hearing, as if *that* were really and viſibly before you, by which Chriſt and ſin is repreſented in preaching of the word.

4. Labour to be transformed into what you hear, obeying this word of truth from the heart, *Rom.* 6.17. Conſider, that this word of God engraffed within us, is able to ſave our ſouls, *Jam.* 1.22. and if it be an engraffed word, it will be a fruitful word, appearing in our converſation.

CHAP. VI.

Come, &c.]

THis word [*Come*] containeth what thoſe meſſengers, who are ſent about the Go-

ſpel-

ſpel-errand are to ſay: that is to ſpeak to the gueſts to come away, and partake of that Goſpel-proviſion, to which they were invited. The word is metaphorical, anſwerable to the matter ſpoken of. Here I note.

Obſer. That God would have us come at his call in the voice of the miniſtry, *Matth.* 22. 4. What this call in the voice of the miniſtry is, ye have formerly heard. Now we are to conſider

Sect. 1.

Whither God would have us come.

1. He would have us *come to our ſelves*; for naturally we are *beſides our ſelves*. The prodigal *came to himſelf*, Luke 15. 17. we begin to come to our ſelves, when we begin to act our reaſon like men; conſidering how it hath been, how it is, and how it may be with us.

2. He would have us *come to his people*; for naturally we are aliens from the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, Eph. 2. 12. Come therefore we muſt unto *Mount Sion*, Heb. 12. 22. This coming is the maintaining of affection to, and communion with the people of God. *Paul*, after his converſion went to the Diſciples of Jeſus Chriſt, and would not be beat off from them, though they at firſt were ſhy of his company.

3. He would have us *come to himself.* 1. The father would have us come: *Return to me saith the Lord,* Jer. 4. 1. return to him from whom we have gone astray. 2. The son would have us come, *come to me, Matth.* 11. 28. come to him as a Mediatour to make up all your differences: come to him as a Physitian to heal our infirmities; and as a Prophet to remove your ignorances. 3. The spirit would have us come, *Rev.* 22. 17. He cometh to us that we may come to him to get victory over our sin. Now these three are not contrary Masters to distract our thoughts about our coming to them, but they are all one.

Sect. 2.

By what means should we come.

1. By the use of all means of grace. *Oh come, let us worship, and bow down before the Lord,* Psal. 95. 6. To worship God is to serve him in the participation of his ordinances, to pay tribute, and do homage to the King of Kings, to seek God in his own way.

2. By the exercise of the truth of grace, and in special, the acting of faith. He that comes to God, must believe that he is, and that he is good, *Heb.* 11. 6. The stedfast belief of divine truth, doth very much raise the affecti-

affections: Some call the affections the feet of the soul: Acceptation, Adherence, affiance, Assurance, are four steps in the exercise of faith, whereby we rid ground, and make progress in the way of Christianity.

3. By pressing forward towards the perfection of grace, *Phil.*3.12. as men do their arms in swimming, or their legs in running. These pressing forward appears in regular desires, and in endeavours proportionable.

Sect. 3.

In what manner should we come.

1. *Humbly*; as the prodigal to his father; I am not worthy to be called thy son, *Luke* 15. 19. fall down, lie prostrate before the Lord. This gesture suits our meanness and his greatness.

2. *Speedily*, as *Zacheus* to our Saviour, who made haste, and came down, *Luke* 19.6. delays are dangerous in matters of great importance.

3. *Joyfully*, as we come to a feast, especially to a marriage-feast, such as this Gospel provision is, *Mat.*22.

Sect. 4.

How it appears God will have us come.

Here let us consider three remarkable juntures of time, wherein Christ, who is sent of God, hath bid men come.

1. When he came into the world, and appeared with the sole power of saving souls. *All things* (saith he) *are delivered to me of my father*, and presently he addeth, *Come unto me*, Matth. 11.27, 28. as if he had said, the power my father hath given me is to be employed for this end, to perswade you to come unto me, or to come unto him by me.

The eight or last day of the feast the *Jews* called *Hosannah Rabbah*.

2. When he was to sum up many days preaching, in the last day of a great feast, these were his last words, *come to me*, *John* 7.37. as if he had said, were I to preach to all the world, and were then presently to leave the world, these should be my last words, come to me.

3. When he was ascended, and sent his mind in a Letter in that book of the Revelations, these words are the close of that Epistle, *come, come*, Rev. 22. 16. as if he had said, I am still of the same mind I was, when I was upon the earth: heaven and earth rings of his coming, *The Spirit, and the bride say come.* The bride upon earth, the spirit in his Saints, and Christ from heaven. And in effect Christ tells his elect I have a heart to come to you, but I must have all you mine elect to come

to

to me first: you would have me come down, but I must stay here, till all that the father hath given me be come unto me.

CHAP. VII.

Use 1. HOw much are they to blame then, that will not come; *ye will not come to me*, saith Christ, *John* 5. 40. Great men take it ill, when men wilfully refuse to come upon a solemn invitation. Many that are invited, instead of coming to God, rebel against him. *Amos* compareth such unto horses running upon a rock, where first they break their hoofs, then their necks, *Amos* 6. 12. To come to God in Christ is the best entertainment we can give the Gospel. To come to hear is something; to receive God's messengers respectfully is something, to be reclaimed from profaneness, and to take up a form of Religion is something; but the chief of all is wholly to give up our selves to Jesus Christ. This is the seal and glory of the Gospel ministry, 2 *Cor.* 3. 1, 2. *Phil.* 4. 1.

Use 2. For Caution: though God would have us come at his call, yet he will not always call upon us to come, *Gen.* 6. 3. the day of grace proves but a short day to many.

Consider likewise, though God would have

us come at his call, yet no man can come of himself. No man can come to Christ, except the father draw him, *John* 6. 44. There can be no motion towards God without an influence from God.

Use 3. Be exhorted to come: *come and see*, John 1.46. Take notice of the *Messias*, and the plentiful provision which God hath prepared for mankind through him; consider the worth that is in him: behold the Lamb of God, *John* 1. 29. God hath sent forth his son, that men may look upon him, and be taken with his perfect beauty.

Come and buy, Isa. 55. 1. ye can bring nothing to purchase Gospel-provision, but ye may make it as truly yours as any thing you have bought is yours, by your applying it by a true and lively faith.

Come also and eat, Isa. 55. 1. Labour to taste the sweetness of this Gospel-provision in a way of experience: live so, that it may appear you are nourished by Gospel-food. Finally, come and rejoyce together, *Psal.* 95. 1. give thanks for all those Gospel-mercies he bestows upon you.

Quest. *Here it may be demanded, who should come?*

Resp. 1. Come ye distressed souls, that know not where to have ease elsewhere.

Com

Come all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, Matth. 11. 28. steep your souls in this sweet sentence of our Saviour, 'tis a precious cordial. Mr. *Midgeley* sometime Minister at *Ratchdale* in *Yourkshire*, oppressed with melancholy and sad temptations to self-murder, and going down to the waterside to drown himself, having the new Testament in his pocket, took it out, and opening it, happily cast his eye upon this Text, *come unto me all ye that labour*, &c. whereupon he was so supported, that he uttered these words, sayest thou so? then will I not drown my self. Ah precious word of God!

A remarkable story.

2. Come ye empty souls, that have no money, *Isa.* 55. 1. that are sensible of your own wants and worthlesness.

3. Come ye hungry and thirsty souls, that would fain have supply, *Rev.* 22. 17. here ye may fill your souls to satisfaction.

4. Yea come, who will come, *Rev.* 22. 17. ye that are willing to take Christ upon Gospel-terms, ye shall not go without him.

Motives to perswade you thus to come.

1. Consider, Christ cometh down, who is the true bread of God, *John* 6. 33. he came among us, that we might come to him.

2. Doctrine

2. Doctrine comes down, and that like rain, which shall not return without some effect wrought, *Isa.* 55. 10, 11. God speaketh out of his holy Temple: Oh the sweet distilling voice of God in the Gospel!

3. Grace comes down; the gracious working of God's holy spirit, *Jam.* 1. 17.

Consider what entertainment ye shall have if ye come.

1. If ye will come, ye shall be most heartily welcome. Christ saith, *Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast off*, John 6. 37. If you trust your souls in his hand, they shall not miscarry.

2. If you now come to Christ by his spirit, he will one day come in his own person to fetch you, *John* 14. 3. Like a bridegroom, who having prepared all at home, cometh himself, and fetcheth his bride, and doth not send for her by others, because it is a time of the nearest and fullest kind of love.

3. If you will not come at God's call to obey him, God will not come at your call to relieve you, *Prov.* 1. 28. Nay, instead of this voice, [*come*] there will be that voice [*Go*,] or depart from me ye cursed, *Matth.* 25. 41. what amazing horrours will then possess you.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

For all things are now ready.]

THis clause gives us the reason of the foregoing words. *All things.*] Some of the Fathers understand these words of both Testaments, all theholy Scriptures. Others of the mystery of the Gospel in every part of it. We may take the meaning of these words of Christ, in those other words of his Apostle St. *Peter, all things appertaining to life and godliness,* 2 Pet. 1. 3. *Are now ready.*] Now since the time of Christ's coming in the flesh, all things are ready. The Greek word in the Text for *ready*, is such a kind of readiness, wherein there is sureness, firmness, compleatness, and that according to divine destination. So *Amama*, and the ancient *Hellenists* do use the word. Hence I observe,

Ἑτοιμάζω passim usurpatur pro κρεμάσθαι. Cujus rei causa petenda est ex ambiguo Ebraei כרן *seu* כון *quod & parationis & firmationis notitionem habet.*

Sect. 1.

Obser. That all things appertaining to man's happiness, do now appear to be in readiness, *Matth.* 22. 4. All things may be said to be ready,

I. In

I. In metaphorical or borrowed words, answerable to the language of the Text.

1. *The house is prepared*, wherein this Gospel-provision is made. *Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewen out her seven Pillars*, Prov. 9. 1. This wisdom is Christ: The house built is the Church, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. that is the mountain wherein the feast of fat things is made: that is the upper room, wherein this supper of the Lord is eaten. This is that building of living stones spoken of, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. that select company, unto which God adds those whom he intends to save, *Acts* 2. 47. the hewing of seven pillars is the laying of a firm foundation: such, as the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church of God, *Matth.* 16. 18. and the pillars hewen, may signifie that spiritual beauty, which accompanies the Church's spiritual safety.

The Hebrew word for wisdom is in the plural number חכמות and this may be *honoris causa*, or by an Ellypsis, as if it were wisdom of of wildoms. *Junius* renders it *summa sapientia.*

2. *The beasts are killed*, of which this Gospel-provision consisteth; *ver.* 2. the Oxen and fatlings of the King of Kings, *Matth.* 22. 4. the typical sacrifices are slain, and so is the real sacrifice, *Christ*; the Scripture speaks of him

him brought as the Lamb to the slaughter: and he is the Lamb slain, acceptable to God, nourishing us.

3. *The wine is mingled* which belongs to this Gospel-provision, *ver.* 2. mingled either with spices, to make it the more delicious, or with water, whereby Wine in those hot Countries was cooled, and became the more refreshing: such mingling kept from enflaming those that drank it. Hereby is intimated the delicious, or refreshing dainties in the Gospel, *Isa.* 55 *c* 1.

4. *The Table is spread,* or furnished, by which this Gospel-provision is set forth before others, *ver.* 2. The shew-bread is set down, which of old represented Christ's body, both natural and mystical. Christ is evidently set forth before our eyes in Gospel-ordinances, *Gal.* 3. 1.

5. *The attendants are in a waiting posture, by* whom this Gospel-provision is serv'd unto others. *Wisdom hath sent forth her Maids,* ver. 3. that is, messengers, and dispensers of holy things. Not that Maids, or Matrons, or any women are allowed to be Ministers, but the allegory is prosecuted with correspondent terms. Christ being compared to a Queen; the Pastors and Teachers are resembled to Maids of honour.

Sect.

Sect. 2.

II. In proper and plain words: All things are ready thus.

Littera Scripta Manet.

1. The mind of God concerning the salvation of all his elect is ready: *the foundation of the Lord standeth sure*, 2 Tim. 2. 19. their names are already written in the Book of Life, and what he hath written, he hath written, it shall there abide.

2. The work of Christ for the recovery of lost man is ready; that work of our Redemption which he undertook to do, is done, 'tis finished, wherefore this Priest of ours is set down at the right hand of God, *Heb.* 10. 12. as one having done his work, in opposition to the Priests of old, who stood daily, *ver.* 11. The mystery of the Gospel in man's recovery is a curious piece of work, but 'tis perfectly wrought: there are many particular excellent stories about it, but they are all compleated, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. The incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, are all over.

3. The remission of sin upon the score and account of Christ is ready. God is *ready to pardon*, Neh. 9. 17. but 'tis through Christ, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. Pardons are (as it were) written out

out, and ready to be distributed to those who will accept of them. Yea, pardoning grace is daily ready to be renewed according to the fresh acting of faith.

4. The glorious inheritance in heaven is now ready: God hath prepared that City for all believers, *Heb.* 11. 16. heaven is a Kingdom prepared for them.

Quest. *How doth all now appear to be in readiness?*

Resp. Since Christ's coming in the flesh, the veil is taken off from the Law of *Moses*; the Curtain is drawn aside, that the light comes in abundantly; those Riddles are now unfolded. Moreover, since Christ's Incarnation, the new Testament is added to the old, whereby there is a great advantage for light; the prophesies are now turned into Histories: the Canon of Scripture is now compleated, no more is now to be added, *Rev.* 22. 18.

CHAP. IX.

Use 1. THis informeth us, that man hath nothing to do toward his own happiness, but to receive what God hath prepared, and to walk as he hath received it: the receiving is by faith: a weak faith is a joynt

Pro-

Possessor, though no faith is a joynt purchaser of this special priviledge. The walking as we have received Christ, is to express the truth of our faith in the holiness of our life, with all conscientiousness as in God's sight, and exemplarinesss as in mens sight, *Col.* 2. 6, 7.

Here see the difference between God and man, in reference to Gospel-provision. All is ready on God's part, but alas! what an unreadiness is there on our part, how indisposed are we to any thing that is good? Inasmuch as God speaks thus to man, *wilt thou not be made clean, when shall it once be?* Jer. 13. 27. Men linger in the state of nature, as *Lot* in *Sodom*, and did not God pull them out, there they would abide for ever.

Use 2. For Caution. Though all things be said to be now ready, we must not think, as if all were but now ready: we must know, that Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, *Rev.* 13. 8. so that Christ's blood in its vertue, and God's acceptation was of force for man's salvation in the days before he came personally into the world. And as for the foundation of man's happiness in his election, this was prepared before the foundation of the world, *Rom.* 9. 23. Moreover, though all things are said to be

be now ready, yet there is much to be done before all the elect come to heaven; there are many enemies of Christ which must be pull'd down, 1 *Cor.* 15.25. and though Christ hath done the work of a Priest on earth in offering up himself as a sacrifice, yet he is still doing the work of the High Priest in heaven, presenting the worth of his sufferings in the presence of his father, as he did once die for us; so he doth ever live for us, *Heb.* 7. 25.

Use 3. Be exhorted to answer this readiness of God.

1. Be ready to receive this grace of the Gospel: all things are ready, therefore come, *Matth.* 22.4. let thy heart be ready and prepared, remove the filth that is in thy heart: adorn thy heart with gracious qualities: attend upon means of grace, there God comes with a blessing. This Gospel feast is ready, but are you ready for that? Are your cloaths ready? have you put on the Lord Jesus, whose righteousness is the white garments of Saints? are your stomachs ready, is your appetite up to this feast?

2. Be ready to express this grace of the Gospel: answer this readiness of God's good will in your readiness to do the will of God; express it in acts of piety towards him: be ready to hear what the Lord hath

to speak, *Eccl.* 5. 1. Prepare your hearts unto the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 7. 3. holy duties call for holy preparation. The *Jews* had their laver in their services, washings with sacrifice.

Express it likewise in acts of charity towards men. *In reference to the soul*, be ready to give an answer to those that ask you a reason of the hope that is within you, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. Which tends much, as to the confirming of the truth, so to the edifying of souls. *In reference to the body*, be ready to distribute your worldly goods, to supply the bodily wants of others, 1 *Tim.* 6. 18. Shew it also in your readiness to suffer the will of God. St. *Paul* was ready, not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus, *Act.* 21. 13. but as for the exercise of this hard part of Religion, the spirit is ready sometimes, but the flesh is weak, *Mark* 14. 38.

Now to move you unto this readiness to receive and express the grace of the Gospel, Consider,

The grave is ready to receive you: wherefore work out your salvation with fear and trembling. The Tribunal of God is ready to receive you. *All must give an account to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead*, 1 Pet. 4. 5. heaven is ready to receive you, if you

you thus receive and expreſs the grace of the Goſpel: 'tis a kingdom prepared for you: the gates of this kingdom are open for you, if your hearts are open to the word of this kingdom. Otherwiſe hell is ready to receive you, and everlaſting fire is preparing for you. *Tophet* is prepared for the higheſt rank of ſinners, *Iſa.* 30. 33.

SERM. VI.

Luke 14. 18.

And they all with one conſent began to make excuſe, &c.]

CHAP. I.

OF the invitation to Goſpel-proviſion ye have heard, now followeth the anſwer of *the Gueſts* who were invited, and their anſwer is returned by way of denyal, which denyal, or refuſal of theirs is firſt more generally deſcribed, and then more particular or diſtinctly; anſwering to (though it be an ill requital of) the

The Gueſts prove Recuſants.

the invitation which was first generally delivered, and then more distinctly renewed.

This refusal of theirs in general, may be branched out thus for our more methodical proceeding in the handling of the words.

1. Here is the universality of it. *And they all.*] 2. The unanimity of it, or rather the the conspiracy of it, *with one consent.* 3. The plausibility, or rather the hypocrisie of it, *Began to make excuse.* For the first, the refusal is universal, *They all.*] *All* is here and elsewhere taken for *many*, or the most of a company; as sometimes *many* is taken for *All*, Rom. 5. 19. And this *All* in our Text doth in a special manner refer to the *Jews*, though it represent all those in any Nation, or Age of the world, who upon any occasion slight the Gospel. Here I note,

Hæc est particula, non universalis simpliciter, sed indefinita, restringenda ad materiam subjectam. Beza.

Obser. That Gospel-provision, as it is generally offered, so it is generally refused, *Matth.* 22. 5, 6. The Gospel-provision with its general offer we have already considered, now we are to enquire what this general refusal is. I answer, 'tis a refusal by the major

jor part of men. 1. By Rulers, *John* 7.48. worldly Potentates, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. The crucifyed Saviour, a man of sorrows held forth in the Gospel is not relished by the great *Dons* of the world. The *Roman* Princes, as well as the *Jewish* Rulers would have none of him. This was long before foretold, *Psal.* 2. 2. 2. The major part of the Learned men refuse Christ. At *Athens* the Philosopers of the Epicureans and Stoicks, opposed the preaching of the Gospel by St. *Paul*, *Act.*17.18. Thus not only the Senators of *Rome*, but the Scholars at *Athens* refused the Gospel. 'Twas an observation of King *James* who was a great Scholar, as well as a great Prince, that the deep Theorems of Philosophy, make men Learned, but seldom better, and oftimes worse, even meer Atheists. 3. The major part of the common people refuse Christ. The multitude cryed of Christ, *crucifie him, crucifie him*: and all the world *wondred after the beast*, Rev. 13.3. The multitude are ready to follow their Ring-leaders. If the major part of the two former sorts go amiss, no wonder if the major part of this latter sort follow them.

Pauci salvantur respectivè. Gloss. Ordin. in loc.

'Twas a Proverb in times of Popery, that Hell was paved with Priests shaven Crowns, and Great Mens Head-pieces.

CHAP. II.

Quest. 1. WHat is this *general refusal*? *Resp.* It will appear *de facto* that this refusal is general, and that by an induction of particulars, when and where this Gospel-provision hath been offered.

1. In *Noahs* time the refusal was general. The Inhabitants of the old world generally disobeyed the word of the Gospel held forth by that Preacher of Righteousness, 1 *Pet.* 3. 19,20. they slighted that provision that was made for their safety.

2. In *Isaiahs* time the refusal was general; he complaineth, who hath believed our report? *Isa.* 53.1. that is, none almost. How did *Jeremy* contend with the Nobles, the Priests, and the people, who refused the word of God!

3. In Christ and his Apostles time the refusal was general. How many had an hand in opposing Christ even to the death? *Matth.* 27. 1,3,25,27. and the History of the *Acts* of the Apostles tells us, that Christ's Apostles had no better usage; every age since even to this present time will give in the proof of this truth.

This

This refusal is general.

1. In respect of the Doctrine of the Gospel, which men generally look upon as strange and incredible, and so will not believe it, but rather scoff at it. Thus it was when St. *Paul* preached *Jesus*, and the Resurrection at *Athens*. *Anastasis*, the Greek word for the Resurrection, they took for some new God saith *Oecumenius*. Some of Christ's hearers, heard him, wondered, and so departed. *Oecumenius.*

2. In respect of Gospel-discipline, which seemeth hard, so men will not submit to it. Those that take up Christ's yoak, must deny themselves, how hardly are men brought to put their necks to his yoak? Many are resolute against Christ's government, *Luke* 19. 14. his Laws and Ordinances are slighted by many.

3. In respect of Gospel-professours, men generally contemn them as despicable, and care not for their company, *John* 7. 49. Some will have no converse with them: others bitterly reproach them, and desperately persecute them; and how few do heartily close with them!

Q. *Why is this refusal so general?*

Resp. The three grand enemies of man's

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Q. *Why is this refusal so general?*

Resp. The three grand enemies of man's

salvation do oppose Gospel-provision.

1. *The world*, or the powers of the earth without us. And though some do overcome the world, 1 *John* 5. 4. yet experience tells us, how many the world overcometh with its frowns and favours.

2. *The flesh*, or the power of corrupted nature within us: our carnality is contrary to the spirituality of the Gospel, *Rom.* 8. 7. the Gospel bids us make no provision for the flesh, *Rom.* 13. 14. that is for sinful lusts, but the flesh would have all provision for it self.

3. *The Devil*, or the power of hell beneath us, who blinds the minds of unbelievers, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. they cannot see the excellency of the Gospel, thence it comes to pass, they oppose it so much. Men generally do no better, because generally they know no better, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us, that Christ's flock is a little flock, *Luke* 12. 32. few there be that find the way that leads to everlasting life. *Lucian* saith, good men are very few. They will stand in a little room compared with the rest

Sutton lect. on Rom. 11.

rest of the world. Dr. *Sutton* saith, divide the whole world into three parts with *Ptolomy*, or into four with some latter writers; or with some Geographers into six; and you shall find one of six that profess the true God. Those that do, are driven into a narrow compass of the North-west: and in that company take out Atheists, Papists, Newtrals, Worldlings, and Hypocrites; the remainder will be very small; nothing to the others.

Here also see, that multitude is no true note of a Church, as the Papists say. The Church was once contained in the family of *Seth*, *Gen.* 6. 2. afterwards in the Land of *Canaan*. Since Christ's coming, how hath it been crowded through the defection under Antichrist's reign into a small compass. *Augustine* saith, we must not number, but ponder the men, to find out the true note of a true Church. Another of the ancients saith, that a Church consisteth not in the multitude of number, but in the goodness of vertue.

Use 2. Let me give a Caution in diverse things.

1. Though men generally refuse true happiness, yet men generally desire some kind of happiness, *Psal.*4.6. All desire happiness, though they desire it ignorantly, confusedly, and preposterously. They make towards happiness

pineſs as in a miſt, in a wilderneſs, in and out; ſometimes they think of one thing, ſometimes of another to make them happy. The Heathens groped after happineſs, but could not find it. Such natural deſires to happineſs left in fallen man, are called by ſome of worth a ſtock to graft the Plant of grace upon.

2. Though men generally refuſe the Goſpel, yet there may be more receive it then we are aware of. *Elias* thought he was left alone, *Rom.* 11.3. but he was not: *Obadiah* had hid an hundred of them in a Cave: And God had reſerved ſeven thouſand who had not bowed the knee to *Baal*.

3. Though men generally refuſe the Goſpel, yet many do receive it. Chriſt bringeth *many ſons to glory*, Heb. 2.10. there were an 144000 ſealed, *Rev.* 7.4. They are many conſidered in themſelves, though few compared with others.

4. Though the *Jews* generally refuſed the Goſpel, yet they ſhall generally receive the Goſpel: and ſo *All* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved*, Rom. 11.26. Some by [all *Iſrael*] underſtand the whole people of God conſiſting both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*: So *Calvin*, *Oſiander*, *Theodoret*, St. *Auguſtine*. Some the *Jews* only, ſo *Pareus*.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Use 3. BE exhorted then not to follow a multitude to do evil, *Exod.* 23. 2. follow them not.

1. *In their guids* by which they are led. Which are 1. Humane commands. *Argumentum turpissimum est Turba.* Seneca.

The multitude in matters of Religion are carryed by the Edicts and Commands of their Governours in all times. The ten Tribes *walked willingly after the commandment of Jeroboam*, Hos. 5. 11. though it was to a false worship. Those that take up any form of Religion for mens sake, will as soon lay it down again for mens sake. Witness those many turnings in this Nation in a short space in the Reign of King *Henry* VIII. King *Edward* VI. Queen *Mary*, and Queen *Elizabeth*. 2. Humane examples, though never so corrupt. The conversation of men naturally is traditional, according to what they have received from their fore-fathers, 1 *Pet.* 1. 18. walking like an herd of Cattel, treading in the steps of one another without any consideration: follow not such brutish guids.

2. *In the way* wherein they walk, follow them not there: it is the broad way that the

[many]

[many] of the world walk in, *Matth.* 7. 13. that way which is easiest, or most pleasing to flesh and bloud they take. *Per viam publicam ne ingredere*, saith *Pythagoras*.

Secondly, be perswaded to live contrary to the multitude: act upon higher principles, lead another kind of life than the most do; swim against the stream. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*, Matth. 7. 13, 14. The way to heaven is up-hill, it is directly contrary to that way which the most walk in. *What do ye more than others?* Matth. 5. 47. The true godly man is set apart from the multitude, *Psal.* 4. 4. He acts apart from others. *Noah* lived contrary to all the old word, *Gen.* 6. 9.

Consider, that the broad way, that the many go in, leads to destruction, *Matth.* 7. 13. the refusers and disobeyers of the Gospel are punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, 2 *Thes.* 1. 8, 9. No sin will gripe so in hell (saith one) as unbelief, or disobedience against the Gospel: when a man shall think, I might have been delivered, but I cast away my self by refusing those rich offers tendred to me in the Gospel. Walk therefore in the narrow way, that Christ's little flock walks in, for this leadeth to everlasting life, *Matth.* 7. 14.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

With One Consent, &c.]

IN these words we have the second particular, in the refusal by the Guests invited to the Gospel-provision: the unanimity or conspiracy in their refusal: they refuse with one consent. Though there be a defect of the word for [*consent*] in the original, yet it is necessarily supplyed in the Translation, to make the sense in our language. The Greek Tongue speaks thus concisely in other writings. This [*one consent*] *Theophilact* interprets by compact, or constitution, intimating the close combination of these refusers of Gospel-provision.

Potest commodissimè suppleri γνώμης, *aut* βουλῆς Beza. Ἑλλίπες. Camerar.

Observ. The refusers of the Gospel do agree together in that, though they may differ in several respects.

1. Though they differ *in nation*, yet they agree against the truth. *Gebal*, *Ammon*, *Amalek*, &c. *Psal.* 83.6,7,8. here were ten sorts of people confederate against God and his people: yea, some of them were near allyed to *Israel*, whom God would not suffer the

Israe-

Israelites to molest, when they came out of *Egypt*, Deut. 2.4,5,9. They combine here against *Israel*, to cast them out of God's inheritance, so ill did they reward them.

2. Though they differ *in Religion*, yet they agree to oppose the Gospel. Thus the *Romans* and the *Jews*: the *Romans* worshipt many Gods, the *Jews* but one God, and that the true God, yet both these people combined against Christ, and put him to death. *The Gentiles and people of* Israel *were gathered together*, Act. 4.27. though they agreed not in the profession of Religion, yet they agreed in the persecution of Religion, and that with extremity of malice.

3. Though they differ in opinion, yet they agree to oppose them, that hold to the truth of the Gospel. The Councel before which St. *Paul* was brought in defence of the Gospel, one part was *Pharisees*, and the other part was *Sadducees*, Act. 23.6. The *Pharisees* held the Resurrection; the *Sadducees* were against it: yet both oppose St. *Paul's* Doctrine.

4. Though they differ *in affection*, yet they agree in dis-affection to Christ. *Herod* and *Pilate* were made friends in putting Christ to death, *Luke* 23.12. 'Tis ordinary to see some great Persons that envy one another, to

to be as one in opposing good men.

5. Though they differ *in factions* and parties, yet they can agree together against the godly party; as the *Herodians* and the *Pharisees* against Christ, *Mark* 12. 13. The *Herodians* were Courtiers, and sought to bring in Tyranny; the *Pharisees* were popular, and sought to maintain the peoples liberties.

CHAP. VI.

How they agree will appear.

1. IN *the design* they drive at, which is to oppose the power of godliness; they set themselves against the holy Child Jesus, *Act.* 4. 26. The seed of the serpent is against the seed of the woman. That quarrel presently brake forth in *Cain* against *Abel*.

2. *In the principle* they act from, natural light, carnal reason, which is not only dimsighted about, but prejudiced against spiritual things, natural men being careless of the presence of God, as they are void of the fear of God, *Rom.* 3. 18.

3. *In the rule* they walk by, which is their own will, their lust their law, *Eph.* 2. 2, 3. and not the will of God or his law. The will of a natural man is fully for sin, though his con-

conſcience may appear againſt it: Thus wicked men oppoſe the Goſpel with one conſent, their will ſtanding in direct oppoſition to God's will.

4. *In the way* which they take to carry on their oppoſition to the Goſpel.

1. They lay their heads together as one in a way of conſultation. *The Rulers take counſel together againſt the Lord, and againſt his annointed*, Pſal, 2. 2. They have (as it were) a ſtock of knowledge in common, and are ready to afford each other aſſiſtance in reſiſting the truth.

2. They joyn their hearts together in a way of approbation taking pleaſure in the ſins of one another, *Rom.* 1. 32. what one acteth, the other liketh and approveth; though the one and the other be diſapproved of God.

3. They ſtrike their hands together as one, in a way of confederation, *Pſal.* 83. 5. they enter into league, make all as ſure as they can on their ſide.

Queſt. *How comes it to paſs, that ſinners thus agree together?*

Reſp. 1. They are endued with one nature; and ſo are all as it were of one complexion and diſpoſition. No wonder to ſee them act alike, who are alike; it were a wonder, if they ſhould not.

2. They

2. They serve one Master. *Belzebub*, the Prince of Devils, whose interest it is not to have his kingdom divided against it self, *Matth.* 12. 25, 26. The Prince of the Air hath his several Regions and Regiments, and in such order, that all act one under another unto the same end.

CHAP. VII.

Ejusdem doctrinæ vinculum, knits together the old Jewish Church with the Christians. *Calvin.*

Use 1. THis informs us, that consent is no true mark of the true Church. Consent may be among the wicked in the kingdom of Antichrist, *Rev.* 13. 16. Consent therefore simply (saith *Mr. Perkins*) unless it be joyned with true faith, and true doctrine, is not of force to declare unto us the true Church. The unity of the Church depends upon the unity of the Doctrine and Covenant, which is therein professed and believed. Make Doctrines diverse, and you make Churches diverse: There cannot be one Church, but there must be one faith, and one doctrine believed.

Use 2. Yet notwithstanding take these Cautions.

1. That sinners do dissent among them-

selves, though they do thus sin with one consent, both the erroneous & vicious sort of sinners. *Errour*, as it differs from the truth, so it jarrs with it self. Wicked men do not only oppose the godly, but one another, and that most violently. *Ahab* not only persecutes *Elijah* the Prophet, but also fights against *Benhadad* the *Syrian*. Two wicked Kings oppose one another, 1 *King*. 20.

2. Yet a particular sinner dissenteth with himself: the light of nature, and the corruption of nature do oppose one another: natural conscience, and natural corruption do maintain a conflict. As the regenerate part, and the unregenerate do fight in the godly man, so doth an inlightned conscience, and corrupted nature in the wicked man.

Use 3. Be exhorted not to consent to sinners if they entice thee, *Prov*. 1. 10. yield not, though they set upon thee with several arguments, as

1. The safety of the attempt, lurking privily without peril, without any fear to have their plot discovered, or their persons punished. To this oppose the intuitive and vindicative eye of God.

2. The facility of their exploits, to prevent the doubts that may arise against their proceeding, for the difficulty of their attempts, and

and doubtfulness of their success, *ver.* 12. but God can undo all they do.

3. The commodity that they shall get by their attempt, not trifles of no value, but riches of all sorts, wherein they shall store their houses, as conquerours do when they sack Cities, *ver.* 13. but here oppose the loss of the soul for ever.

4. The equality of the distribution of the commodity, all shall share alike, *ver.* 14. To this oppose the place of the damned. There will be one hell to hold all those sinners which now go on to sin thus with one consent. A good Gentlewoman afflicted in conscience, uttered these words a little before her death. *O Lord! let me not go to hell where the wicked are, for Lord, thou knowest, I did not love their company here.*

Secondly, consent unto that which is contrary to sin.

1. Consent *to the law of God*, that it is good, vote for it, and with it, as the rule of right, even when you see you cannot perfectly fulfil it.

2. Consent *to the worship of God*, to serve him with one consent, *Zeph.* 3. 9. Agree to all God's ordinances, slight not any of them.

3. Consent *to the people of God*, be one with them, that are one with the Lord: all ye that

profess Religion, see that with one mind and mouth ye glorifie God, *Rom.* 15.6. If sinners have their [*Come*] to wickedness, should not Saints much more have their [*Come*] to holiness? *Isa.* 2.3,5. *Zech.* 8.21.

Oh how beautiful is unity with verity, consent and concord with truth! It is the Livery of Christ, the badge which he hath given for his Disciples to wear, *John* 13. 35. his seamless Coat, and unbroken body represented it. It is the glory of heaven; there the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one in essence: there Saints are one in affection and communion without any division, and here Christ would have us so one, *John* 17.21.

SERM-

SERM. VII.

LUKE 14. 18.

They all began to make excuse.

CHAP. I.

THe next thing considerable is, how ready, or forward they are to refuse. *They began to make excuse.*] *Lyra* saith here, the Kingdom of heaven is shut against none, but such as shut it against themselves, and that by the profession of their own language. They began. Man begins the quarrel, though God begins the pacification. They began, and so continued, as that Greek word, Ἄρνομαι denoteth, putting off the grace offered, till they excluded themselves from true happiness. Here note,

Lyra in Gloss. Ordinar.

Chemnit. in loc.

Obser. That men exclude themselves

from the good things of the Gospel: when God begins to offer them life and salvation, they begin to refuse it.

1. *They exclude themselves from the grace of the Gospel, as*

1. From the outward means of grace, Gospel-ordinances, Church-priviledges: they put the word of God from them, *Act.* 13. 46. they thrust it away in a rude manner. Walking in Gospel-ordinances is called *order*, Col. 2. 5. Men therefore who refuse to walk orderly, or regularly, according to the rule of the Gospel, do deprive themselves of the priviledges of the Gospel.

2. From the inward work of grace: here men exclude themselves by resisting the Holy Ghost, when he cometh by his motions to their hearts, *Act.* 7. 51. This is called sometimes *quenching of the spirit*, 1 Thes. 5. 19. *grieving the spirit*, Eph. 4. 30. *vexing the spirit*, Isa. 63. 10. This is done by many reiterated acts of opposition unto spiritual motions. A man is grieved, when one doth him a discourtesie, but when he shall go on to heap up discourtesies, this stirreth up vexation: sometimes it is called *Tempting the spirit*, Act. 5. 7. sometimes *despising*, or *offering despite to the spirit*, Heb. 10. 29. this is the highest injury

injury that any can offer to the spirit of grace.

2. *They exclude themselves from the glory of the Gospel.*

They shut themselves not only out of the kingdom of grace here, but also out of the kingdom of glory hereafter, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life, *Act.* 13. 46. their own actions passing judgment upon them, that they are not meet, nor fit to inherit glory.

CHAP. II.

Quest. HOw *do men exclude themselves?*

Resp 1. By sin in the general, and in special by unbelief. This hindred the *Jews* from entring into *Canaan*, Heb. 3. 19. this broke them off from all spiritual communion with God, *Rom.* 11. 20. Sin is truly a man's own, what his sin doth, he himself doth. And as for the sin of unbelief, it is an unwillingness to close with Gospel-provision, *John* 5. 40.

That men exclude themselves from grace and glory will thus appear.

1. *God doth not exclude man.*

1. Consider the perfect state of grace wherein God made man. God made man

upright, *Eccles.* 7.29. man might then have gone to heaven in his Primitive natural strength.

2. Consider the plentiful means God hath prepared for the recovery of lost man: *bread enough, and to spare*, Luke 15.17.

3. Consider the free offer of grace which God makes to men in such indefinite and general terms, *Mark* 16. 15. None are to be put by from hearing the Gospel preached, and none are to be put by from other ordinances, that will subject themselves to the Gospel preached, submitting to the rules thereof. Yea, Christ is ready to receive all that come to him, *John* 6.37.

4. Consider the influence of divine grace, which prevails upon many to everlasting life, through Christ Jesus, *Heb.* 2.10.

2. *The Devil cannot exclude man from happiness*, 1 John 4. 4.

He may present objects, and ply men hard with his suggestions, but he cannot force the will of man. Satan doth what he can to undo man: he tempts men to sin against God, and accuseth men for sin before God; but his power is limited, God hath him in a chain, and will not suffer his servants to be tempted above measure. So then, if God doth not, and the

the Devil cannot, it followeth, that men exclude themselves from happiness.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us, that mans worst enemy is himself: men naturally are cruel to their own souls, *Hos.*13. 9. self-destroyers. Man carrys the fire in his own bosom which consumes him. Men corrupt themselves, and so destroy themselves, *Jude* ver. 10. corrupting themselves spiritually, clouding their natural reason, and hindering the super-natural actings of the soul; and so corrupting themselves eternally; drowning themselves first in sin, and then in perdition: And man's great torment in hell will be by reflecting upon himself. This is *the never dying worm*, Mark 9. 44. the furious reflecting of a man's own conscience upon his former wilful folly.

Use 2. Take this Caution. Though men exclude themselves, yet where God is pleased to put forth sufficient grace, man cannot hinder his own salvation. Though such is the nature of man's will, that it cannot be forced, yet such is the power of God's grace, as to overcome the will of man.

Use 3.

Use 3. Be exhorted, not to cast away your selves; no, not upon any pretence whatsoever. Begin not to make your plea from any outward priviledge, *Luke* 3. 8. look to the power of godliness, and fruits of righteousness, and rest not in any form of Religion, lest one day you begin to say to the mountains, *fall on us*, Luke 23. 30. *Yield your selves unto God*, Rom. 6.13. fear him. This is to begin to be wise, *Prov.* 1.7. The beginning of the Olympian combats was the putting off their garments: cast away your filthy rages, your sins, not your souls: come into the kingdom of grace, and go on till you come to the kingdom of glory. Examine your selves, whether you are in a state of grace: prove that, and it will be evident, you do not exclude your selves, neither shall you be excluded from happiness.

Αρχὴ δὲ τοῦ αγωνίσασθαι τὸ ἀποδύσασθαι. Isidor.

CHAP. IV.

To make excuse, &c.]

WE are now to consider the plausibility, or hypocrisie of the refusal. The

The Greek word, which is here translated [*excuse*] signifies to refuse; so it is used by several Authors. Though as *Marlorat* upon this verse takes notice, that 'tis elegantly interpreted to excuse, because excusing is a refusal with the allegation of a reason, such is the refusal in this Text: the Refusers pretend reason for what they do, some colour and pretext for their practice: excuse the matter they would, though it be but a poor shift they make. Here note,

Παραιτεῖσθαι *deprecari, repudiare, recusare.* Παραιτεῖσθαι χόλον *Plutar.* Παραιτεῖσθαι τὸ θέρος *Aristid.* Παραιτεῖσθαι λόγον. *Porphyr.*

Observ. Sinners have their excuses, pleas, and shifts for what they do. There be those, who will have none of Christ, and yet would put it off fairly if they could, *Psal.* 36. 2.

Quest. *What are the excuses, or pleas which sinners make?*

Resp. 1. They plead multiplicity of worldly business, as here in the following words of my Text: So in *Matth.* 22. 5. men pretend, that their particular callings to maintain their families require so much time, that they cannot afford time for the serious duties of Religion.

2. Men plead the frequency and urgency of outward temptations: they make the presenting of an object an excuse for the irregulari-

gularity of their acting. Men are ready to excuse themselves by accusing others. Thus *Adam* laid the fault upon the woman, and the woman upon the serpent, *Gen.*3.12,13. how ready are people to say, such a one tempted me, and perswaded me, without reflecting upon the naughtiness of their own hearts in yielding, 1 *Sam.* 15.9,15,21.

3. They plead the society and fellowship of others in their way, *Prov.* 1. 14. they shall fare no worse than such and such. Nay perhaps, some may be ready to flatter themselves by the foul faults of holy men, whiles they read of *Noah's* drunkenness, *Lot's* incest, *David's* adultery, *&c.* never minding the repentance of those holy men. Thus, as some abuse the vices of Saints to profaneness, so others abuse the vertues of Saints to superstition.

4. They plead the weakness of their nature, when they are overtaken with passion, drunkenness, or uncleanness, and they cry out; we are but flesh and bloud, no Saints or Angels, what would ye have of us? are we not all sinners?

5. They plead the smalness of the fact, excusing their sins by extenuating them: dealing with their debts towards God, as the unjust Steward did by his Masters debts, setting

down

down fifty for an hundred, *Luke* 16.6. pounds are made shillings, shillings pence, pence farthings, and farthings nothing. Great sins are made little sins, and little sins no sins.

6. They plead their purposes and intentions to do otherwise than they have done: some are *semper victuri*, as *Seneca* speaks, trifling away their time so long, till they fool away their happiness. They say it is time enough to mind Religion hereafter; they hope when they are older, they shall be wiser: and they have heard of some that have been converted, and accepted at the last.

7. They plead the unnecessariness of such strictness in Religion: fair and soft goes farr; what needs there such ado? Acts of charity, the evidence of piety, seems profuseness to some, *Mark*, 14. 4. and some that are backward themselves, are angry with others for being more liberally minded.

8. They plead the safety of their persons, and security of their Estates, *Joh.* 11. 48. 'tis dangerous to mens outward welfare to be too zealous in matters of Religion. He that follows truth too close at heels, as one saith, may have his brains dasht out. When the Emperour sent to the *Athenians* to give him divine honour, take heed saith *Demades*, you be not so busie about heavenly matters, as to lose your earthly possessions.

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9. They

9. They plead an impossibility to fulfil the law of God: framing to themselves this damnable illusion, and soul-deceit, that seeing they cannot with all their care satisfie the law, they will loosen the reins of concupiscence to all manner of iniquity: do what good they can, they shall break the law: and do what evil they will, they can but break the law.

10. They plead the inequality of God's ways. This is the highest step, when men charge God with their sins. To excuse themselves, they will accuse God himself, calling his ways riggid and unequal, *Ezek.* 18. 24. as though God were unequal in electing of persons, *Rom.* 9. 18, 19. that he should chuse some, refuse others: that he should make choice of the unlikelieſt persons for natural parts to do him service. And as though he were unequal in the governing of the world, that his will should be a law: this men think hard, who measure God by themselves; that some should have so much, and others so little in the world: that the wicked should prosper, and the Righteous suffer. Finally, as though he were unequal in the conferring of rewards, that those who have wrought but one hour, should have as much as those who have born the heat of the day, *Matth.* 20. 12.

and

and as though God were unequal in the inflicting of punishments, that when all deserved to be damned, some only should be damned, and others should go free.

Quest. *Why do sinners make excuse?*

Resp. 1. It is the nature of fallen man so to do, *Gen.* 3.12,13. sin and shifting came into the world together. The flesh wants not excuses, nature needs not to be taught to tell her own tale.

2. Sin is so ugly, that sinners will not have it appear in its proper colours; therefore foul sins must have fair names to make them go down the better. As *lust* must be called *love*, Prov. 7.18. should sin appear in its cursed nature, and wretched effects, it would affright men, that they could take no pleasure in committing it.

CHAP. V.

Use 1. THis informs us of the madness of wickedness, *Eccles.* 7. 25. that men should thus dote upon the great enemy to their souls: to excuse sin, and plead for that, what is it but for a man to reason himself out of heaven? it is in effect to bespeak their misery, to tell God, they care not to be saved, or they will damn themselves.

Here also see the difference between sinners

ners and Saints: the one extenuate and excuse their sin, the other aggravate their sin, *Psal.* 51. 4, 5. They that have grace. 1. They acknowledge and confess it, and that with all the circumstances of it, and with the rise, or root of all sin, *viz. Original corruption.* 2. They bewail it, *Rom.* 7. 24. bemoaning themselves because of it, *Jer.* 31. 18. their enclinableness to break God's laws is ready to break their hearts. 3. They revenge it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. out of deepest self-abhorrency buffeting the flesh, and abridging themselves of those lawful comforts which they have abused. *Mary Magdalen* wiped Christ's feet with the hair of her head, which she had formerly abused unto pride and wantonness.

Use 2. Though sinners excuse their sin, yet their sin will accuse them. Now it is so by fits, as their consciences are awakened, which fly in their faces, and bring their sins into remembrance, *Rom.* 2. 15. and hereafter it will be done to some purpose; so that their present excusing of sin is but as the hugging of a serpent in their breast to sting themselves to death. Though men endeavour to hide their sin, yet they may be assured, their sin will discover them, and find them out, *Numb.* 32. 23. Moreover all the pleas and excuses of sinners are such as cannot stand before God's righ-

righteous Tribunal. Sinners and ungodly ones with all their excuses shall not stand in the judgment of God, *Psal.*1.5.

Use 3. Do not deceive your selves by vain excuses, or false reasonings, *Jam.*1. 22. the Greek word is παραλογιζόμενοι, a term of Art implying a sophistical argument, or false syllogism: as thus, They that hear the word shall be saved: But we hear it, *Ergò*. Oh do not thus cheat your selves! Practice what you hear: the making of an erroneous principle the bottom of hope is dangerous, and deluding. Consider, that the hope of the hypocrite will perish: it is compared. 1. *To a rush*, Job 8. 12, 13. which, as it yields no fruit, so it withers sooner than other herbs, that are not seated so near the water. 2. *To a Spider's web*, ver. 14. as soon as houses come to be cleansed, down go cob webs: and when God comes with the besom of destruction, hypocrites perish from his presence, *Isa.* 33. 14. stubble and chaff, and Spiders webs, will never be able to stand before the fire and the wind, and the besom of his wrath.

CHAP. VI.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it, &c.]

THe excuses which these Recusant guests make, are several, as appeareth by the particularizing of these three, by which *Lyra* would have meant those three Capital Crimes, *Pride*, *Covetousness*, *Luxury*. But *Salmeron* (though a Papist) puts by that interpretation as impertinent, because the three things here mentioned, are no sins in themselves, but honest and lawful: as our Interpreters do likewise take notice of, which gives us occasion to note something from all the three excuses put together, before we take a view of them apart: none of the three being to be condemned in themselves, but the immoderate affection which men bear to them, and the unlawful use which they make of them, that being the ruine of men. Hence I note,

Lyra in Glossa Ordin.

Advertendum est in omnibus his excusationibus nihil adduci, quod sit per se malum, sed honesta tantum & licita exercitia, &c. Salmer. in loc.

Obser.

Obser. That the unlawful use of lawful things is the ruine of many: 'tis the case of all these three here mentioned, *Matth.* 22. 5,7. I shall give some instances of this nature; and begin with those in this Parable, as

1. *Purchasing*, buying of a piece of ground. 'Tis lawful to buy and sell, yea needful: it upholds propriety, without which men would live most confusedly. Propriety is the boundary, which keeps off men from devouring one another, it distinguisheth persons, families, and countries, so that what upholds that, must needs be lawful, and very convenient, and such is purchasing, *Jer.* 32. 7. yet how is this abused to the ruining of mens souls, through their covetousness and oppression, in laying house to house, and field to field, *Isa.* 5. 8. how many do bustle for room in the world, as though they were born for no other end than to enlarge their territories and dignities.

2. *Farming*: employing yokes of Oxen to till the ground: This is lawful, though our sins have made the whole Creation groan; yet 'tis lawful for us to use the creatures for our need; and this of Tillage is very needful. The first man was an Husband-man in his innocency, God put *Adam* into the Gar-

den to dress it, *Gen.* 2. 15. So that Gardening, plowing, grazing, is lawful, but the abuse of this raines many, while they so dig in the earth, as to neglect looking up to heaven, unto that God which teacheth men to plow and sow, *Isa.* 28 26.

3. *Marrying*: which is so lawful, that it is the only way lawfully to people the world by, to maintain Churches and commonwealths upon the face of the earth. It was ordained in the state of man's innocency for mutual comfort, *Gen.* 2. 22. 'tis continued since the fall, and now is a special remedy against sin, 1 *Cor.* 7. 2. yet the abuse of this undoes many, when they observe not God's bounds in entring into it, nor God's ends in their using it, but besot themselves with it, as in the days of *Noah*.

4. *Eating* and *Drinking*, which is so lawful and needful, that it is the ordinary way to continue the individuals of mankind, to keep alive particular persons: so bread is the staff of life, yet the abuse of meats and drinks undoes many; when men do not only feed their bodies, but also pamper their lusts, which they should not make provision for *Rom.* 13. 13, 14.

5. *Recreation*: it is lawful to refresh our minds and bodies with honest and harmless exer-

exercises, but the abuse of this in the timing of it, allowing themselves as much, or more time for play than for work, this ruines many. The wise man having spoken of honest and lawful pleasures, which a good man may take in this life, *Eccles.* 2. 24. he presently proceeds to the timing of all things, *Chap.* 3. which is diligently to be observed.

6. *Apparel*: this is lawful, and very useful, and in some sort necessary to safe-guard us from the injury of the weather, and from the shame of sin; yet the abuse of it undoes many, as to the materials of it, when that exceeds the bounds of mens Estates; and as to the fashion of it, when that exceeds the bounds of modesty. Though apparel must be put on, yet there is a putting on of apparel condemned, 1 *Pet.* 3. 3. when 'tis scarce used as a covering, but as a bait.

7. The *hair* of our heads; 'tis lawful to wear it, yet how doth the abuse of it tend to the ruining of many: the excessive lenght of it, frizzles and bushes of vanity maintained by many men: though that order which God hath set in nature condemneth such excess, 1 *Cor.* 11. 14. as likewise the cutting of it by women. God hath punished this unnatural excess in hair by that loathsome disease in the hair called *plica polonica*, as *Hercules de Saxonia* hath observed.

CHAP. VII.

NOw let us see some acts of the unlawful use of lawful things, as

1. When lawful things are used contrary to the owner of them, when men employ the creatures which he giveth against himself, *Hos.* 2.8. as here God complaineth of their giving *his* wine, and oil, *&c.* unto *Baal.* So elsewhere he complaineth of their giving *his* Children to *Moloch.*

2. When lawful things are used contrary to the nature of them: as when men will place a sign of the love and favour of God in the bare enjoyment of worldly possessions. God hath placed no such thing in them, *Eccles.* 9.2.

3. When lawful things are used contrary to the manner wherein we ought to partake of them; as feeding upon the creatures without fear, *Jude* ver. 12. in reference to God, without any fear of his presence, or displeasure: as to themselves and others, without any fear of hurt or shame; feeding unmeasurably, lustfully; making the plenty God hath given them, but as fodder, and fuel to their lusts.

4. When lawful things are used contrary

to

to the end of them; *viz.* God's glory, and man's good.

This comes to pass from the corruption of man's nature, which is ready to turn all into poison, and poison is ready to kill: it is like that herb in the pottage, that made the sons of the Prophets cry out, *Oh thou man of God, there is death in the pot,* 2 King. 4. 39, 40.

CHAP. VIII.

Use 1. IF the abuse of lawful things undoes many, then the use of unlawful things will, 1 *Cor.* 6. 9, 10. such as lying, stealing, swearing, scoffing, whoring, *&c.* heaven is called *an undefiled inheritance,* 1 Pet. 1. 4. either God must change his mind, or men must change their manners, or else there can be no heaven for polluted sinners.

This also informs us, that there is no condition, but it hath its temptation. That which is very lawful, may be near unto that which is sinful and hurtful. when we think our selves farthest from sin, we may be soon overtaken with it. Art thou single, thou maist think thy self free from worldly cares? art thou marryed, thou maist think thy self free from carnal lusts *&c.* but alas! how doth experience evidence our self-deceit herein!

Use 2. Though the unlawful use of lawful things undoes many, and so we ought to be very wary about the use of many lawful things, yet

1. Let no man call that unlawful and forbidden, which is lawful, *Act.* 10. 15. though the Gospel doth strictly tie us, as to the substantial parts thereof, yet it gives a great latitude as to externals. 'Tis indeed hard to deal in the world, and not to be defiled; yet let that bear the blame that should, the carnal lusts within us, not the worldly things without us.

2. Let no man censure another for the use of those things which are lawful, *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?* Rom. 14. *ver.* 4. we are fellow servants serving one Master; we should not judge one another, but refer all judgment to the Master.

3. Let no man bind up himself from the use of lawful things. Though it be good as occasion may serve, to forbear that which we may lawfully do, yet it is not good rashly to tie up our selves by vows from ever using such things again. Amercements, and strict punishments (methinks) is safer for the preserving of a body politick, or natural, than vows or oaths; this latter proving such a snare many times.

Use

Use 3. Make a right use of Christian liberty about lawful and indifferent things, *Gal.* 5. 1. for these things most men do offend. Things expressly forbidden are too gross for a face that is but modest by profession; but in things indifferent there appearing a character of lawfulness stampt upon them, men are apt to grow too peremptory in their use. Wherefore as to such things, look not only at the lawfulness of things, but at the expediency of them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 23. that is thus.

1. In reference *to God*, look at things as they tend to his glory, the exalting of his name and worship, and take heed of all that derogate from his glory, *Rom.* 14. 6.

2. In reference *to your selves*, look at things as they suit with that profession of Religion which you have taken up;
have a care that ye walk πρεπῶς.
worthy of your vocation,
Eph. 4. 1. seemly, comely, or answerable to the grace of that Gospel which you profess: it is not comely for grown men to act as little children; nor for men of fashion and quality to play the peasants: so neither is it comely for Christians, to do all that hath a shew of lawfulness.

3. In reference *to others*, whether good or bad. The good are either weak Christians or strong;

strong; if weak, do not despise them; if strong, do not judge them. And be sure to mind the things that make for peace, 1 *Cor.* 16.14. If men are bad, yet to walk, as to give them no occasion of offence, but to win upon them by your pure and peaceble carriage towards them.

Secondly, so use those worldly things, which are lawful in themselves as not to abuse them, 1 *Cor.* 7.31.

1. Do not abuse your worldly relations, *ver.* 29. as not by the excess of your behaviour, so neither by the defect of it; let no earthly relation hinder you in the exercise of your duty in relation unto God. If you weep in the loss of wife or child, do not weep over-much. If you rejoyce in the marriage of a Wife, or birth of Children, do not rejoyce over much, *v.* 30.

2. Do not abuse your worldly possessions; be as if you possessed them not. It is good to be as *David*, and St. *Paul*, as a weaned child from, and as a crucified man to the things here below. Things that are glued together, how hard are they parted asunder!

SERM.

SERM. VIII.

Luke 14. 18.

The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, &c.]

CHAP. I.

WE are now to consider the excuses apart, and see the weight of each by itself. Touching the first, we may take notice of 1. The matter of the plea given in. 2. The manner of giving it in: where there is the urgency in pressing it, and the hypocrisie in colouring it. For the matter of the plea, or the excuse itself; it is purchasing a piece of ground. By which (saith *Salmeron*) we are to understand the preferring of worldly greatness before heavenly glory. Or according to *Marlorat*, that care of encreasing honours, power, possessions, *&c.* which hinders

Villam emit, qui regna mundi hujus æternis gloriæ bonis Prætulit. Salmeron.

Villam emere, est curare augendi honores, potentiam, possessiones &c. *impediri ab*

evangelio excipiendo. Mailorat. ders many from receiving the Gospel; that while their endeavours are altogether to enlarge their Territories here, to joyn house to house, and to add field to field, that they may become great in this world, they neglect those spiritual things, which make us truly great in the other world, and so deprive themselves of those eternal and glorious enjoyments.

Sect. 1.

Obser. There be those who so endeavour to enlarge their outward condition here, that they cut themselves short of a blessed condition for ever. They seek so much room and place in this world, that they neglect a place in those eternal mansions in the world to come, *Luke* 12. 17, 20.

——*That endeavour to enlarge the outward condition appeareth.*

1. *In respect of the mind* : this is that secret moving cause, from whence external motions do proceed. When the thoughts are sollicitous in worldly ploddings and contrivances: when the desires are boundless and bottomless in worldly matters, there is that unlawful endeavour to outward enlargement, *Luke* 12.17, 18. This is the debasement of the

the mind, when that noble part of us might be employed about things of an higher nature: for the mind of man to be poring in the earth, when it might be meditating on heaven, what is this but to invert that order which God hath set in nature?

2. In respect *of the body*, as to its feeding, cloathing, and housing, when all is excessive. As for the food, when for the quality of it, it must be so delicate, that plain dishes will not serve the turn, like the *Israelites* Manna, which would not go down without Quails, like *Eli*'s Sons, who were not contented with that liberal portion God allow'd them, nor to eat it in that manner as God had prescribed it to them, but catcht at what came to hand, and would have it raw, that they might Cook it to please their licourous taste, 1 *Sam.* 2. 13, 14. likewise for the quality, when it must be so much, feasting unmeasurably without the bounds of Christian moderation, when scarce a meal can be made without something extraordinary: like the rich man, *Luke* 16. 19. faring deliciously every day, cramming themselves so fast, that they scarce know what hunger meaneth.

Again, for the clothing, when that must be so fine and so various; such suits,

ἐσθίδιον ἀπὸ πνεύματος frequentativum. Sic comedunt & libunt,

and

quasi cras morituri, sic ædificant, quasi semper victuri sunt. Hieronym.

and such changes of suits; the finery must be daily, *Luke* 16. 13. or else they think they are as no body.

——Again, for the housing of the body, when the building of that must be so stately, and its furniture so costly, or else they think it below them: so feeding, as though they were to die presently; so building, as though they were to live perpetually, saith St. *Hierome*, Psal. 49. 11.

3. In respect *of the Estate*, as to Farms, Possessions, Plantations, or any kind of Revenue and income, when men do so greedily grasp these things, as though they would *live alone*, Isa. 5. 8. as they cared not for a Neighbour, or at least for one to stand upon even ground with themselves, but to hold what he hath from them. It is ordinary to see men of great Estates to scrape riches together, when they know not for whom, it may be for a fool, it may be for a prodigal, it may be for a stranger, it may be for one every way contrary unto them.

Eccles. 4. 8.

4. In respect *of the Name*: as to their esteem among others, and their dominion over others; they would have their fame and their power spread far and near; they call

call their Lands after their own names, *Psal.* 49.11. that so the name may occasion frequent discourse and admiration of the person that owes the Land. Men are prone to set up *Absalom's pillar* to raise their estimation; and to set up *Nebuchadnezzar's image* to shew their dominion. Men have an itching humour that spreads far, to have their dignity admired, and their dominion feared by others.

5. In respect of *their Posterity*, as to the perpetuating themselves in their Children, seeing they cannot do it in their own persons; how many do adventure the ruining their souls for the raising their families; and though their posterity may approve their doings, yet the course they take, is most egregious folly, *Psal.* 49.13.

Sect. 2.

How men cut themselves short of a blessed condition by their greedy endeavours to enlarge their outward condition, appeareth thus:

I. By this means they will not come into the kingdom of grace. The rich man in the Gospel with his great possessions turn'd his back upon Christ, *Matth.* 19. 22.

1. The immoderate minding the world hinders the meditation of heaven, *Phil.* 3. 19, 20. they are contrary. 2. The

2. The carking care for the body hinders the necessary care for the soul: the one is opposed to the other, *Matth.6.32,33.*

3. The greedy grasping of worldly riches hinders the treasuring up of heavenly riches, *Mat. 6. 19, 20.* the World choaks the Word.

4. The hunting after a name upon earth, takes men off from honouring God's name upon earth, and from minding whether their names are written in heaven.

5. Those that are altogether for their posterity, take no care for the Members of Christ to supply their necessities.

II. Because they that thus shut themselves out of the kingdom of grace, God will shut them out of the kingdom of glory, *Matth.19. 23.* heaven is a stately Palace with a narrow portal. Men must strip, stoop, and strain, or else they cannot enter in at that strait gate.

CHAP. II.

Use 1. THis may inform us, that meer worldly men are great loosers whatsoever they gain, *Matth.16.26.* If they gain never so much of the world, and lose their souls, their loss is incomparable, and irreparable. Though there be a way to redeem men from hell before they die, yet there is no way

way to redeem them out of hell after death.

Here likewise ye may see, what a difficult thing it is to come to heaven. When Christ said, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of God, his Disciples said unto him, *who then can be saved?* *Matth.* 19. 23, 25. because they knew that all men either are, or would be rich. And when our Saviour told them, he meant it only of those that relyed on their riches, yet they remained as much unsatisfied as before, *Mark* 10.24. because they knew how prone men are to trust in that they do enjoy. Men of power are apt to deifie their own strength: Men of morality to advance their own righteousness, and relie on their own merits: Men of wisdom to set up their own reason, and men of wealth to put their confidence in the wedge of gold.

Plato speaks the same in substance with that of our Saviour. Γαθὸν ὅσα διαφερόντως. Καὶ πλούσιον εἰ διαφερόντως ἀδύνατον.

Oh what a folly and vanity is it so to be taken up with worldly enjoyments, as to neglect spiritual endowments! *Luke* 12. 20, 21. is it not a folly to get that which cannot be kept, and to neglect that, which (if once obtained)

Ex auro frænum non meliorat equum.

can never be loſt, *Pſal.*49. 13. what are all thoſe outward accommodations, alas! they are but as the trappings to the horſe, as *Seneca* calls them: and an horſe is valued by his ſtrength and mettle, not by the ſaddle and bridle.

CHAP. III.

Uſe 2. YEt there may be an enlarged temporal Eſtate, and an enlarged ſpiritual Eſtate belonging to one and the ſame perſon. Men may be rich and righteous too, great and good too, holy and honourable too; The Godly Patriarchs and Kings are inſtances here. There is a Chriſtian Brother of high degree, as well as of low degree, *Jam.* 1. 10. it is ſaid that wealth and riches ſhall be in the houſe of the righteous, *Pſal.* 112. 2, 3.

Yet there may be thoſe who are careleſs about the world, and about heaven too: Many are very poor, and very profane: this is to be miſerably poor. Every Pariſh gives in full proof of this truth, beſides Scripture-evidence. A company of lewd fellows of the baſer ſort aſſaulted the houſe of *Jaſon*, to oppoſe thoſe ſervants of God, *Paul* and *Silas*, *Act.*17.5.

Uſe

Use 3. *Is your outward condition strait and mean? then*

1. Do not seek to increase it by unlawful means. If a man saith peremptorily, he will be rich, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. God saith as peremptorily he shall not be rich, *Job* 15. 29. 'tis just with God to stop that mans course, who is resolv'd to go on what ever stands in his way.

2. Account that best for you, which God hath allotted to you, though it be not so full an estate. It was a good frame of spirit in *Moses* when he was but in a mean condition, fled for his life, and was forced to keep sheep in a strange Country for his livelihood, it is said, he was content, *Exod.* 2. 21.

3. Consider, whether God hath not made you amends in spirituals, doth he not afford you plentiful means of grace? have ye not many refreshing incomes by his gracious spirit? some observe of the Church of Christ in *Smyrna*, 'twas the poorest, but the purest of the seven, *Rev.* 2. 8.

Secondly, is your outward condition enlarged? then let not the love of these things get into your hearts, as the things themselves come into your hands. Let your hearts inwardly be enlarged towards

Psal. 62. 10.

that God, who hath enlarged your condition outwardly, 1 *Chr.* 17. 16. and let your hands be enlarged towards others in a way of Charity, in imitation of that God, who hath dealt so bountifully with you. And here especially remember the godly, *Gal.* 6. 10. Thus do not grasp the world too greedily, nor hold it too closely.

CHAP. IV.

And I must needs go and see it.]

HEre we have the urgency wherewith the excuse is pressed. *I must needs*, &c.] or there is a necessity of it. Thus the nature of man makes that necessary, which is but accessary. —*Go and see it.*] These are words of care and desire, expressing the bent of the heart towards the purchase bought. *Go*] He that loves this world, goes beyond the knowledge of himself, and love of God, after this world. *And see it*] here is the fruit of worldly pomp and wealth, to feed the eye; to look upon it. A little serves to feed the body, the rest is only to feed the eye. A worldling must go to the farm he hath bought, rather than to the feast of

Exive & videre, studii & affectuum verba sunt, quæ testantur cor ad villam appositum. Marlorat.

of fat things which God hath prepared; he thinks it more of concernment to look after his Land, than to look after his soul, or Jesus Christ. Hence I note,

Observ. That worldly men look upon earthly things as more necessary than heavenly, *Matth.* 6.32,33.

There is a two-fold necessity.

1. A necessity *of immutability*, opposed to contingency, denoting that which cannot be otherwise. Thus it must needs be, that offences come, *Matth.* 18.7. Thus it was necessary, that the Type and the Anti-type, should answer each the other, *Heb.* 9. 23. but this acception of the word is not the meaning here.

2. There is a necessity *of coaction*, opposed to liberty; when a man doth not use his liberty, but tyes and binds up himself, 2 *Cor.* 9.7. This is the sense here, *I must needs go and see it.*] That is, I will not forbear, or make use of my liberty to restrain me from going and seeing it; I look upon it as of more concernment to busie and please my self in mine estate, than to look after Christ. Some do add a third necessity, *viz. of custom*, Luke 23. 17. but this is not pertinent here.

Ἀνάγκη vim cogentem oppositam libertati habet.

CHAP. V.

Sect. 1.

The truth of this Doctrine appeareth.

1. BY the intentness of worldlings thoughts more upon earthly than heavenly things. *Their inward thought is*, that their houses shall continue for ever, *&c.* Psal. 49. 11. one would think it a Tautology to say, *Their inward thoughts*] for there are no thoughts but inward; all thoughts are wrought in the secret shop of the heart: But there is an elegancy in the phrase. The inward for the very inmost of their thoughts: Their most retired thoughts, and recesses of the soul are about these things, which evidenceth, that these things lie nearest their hearts.

2. By placing their choice upon earthly before heavenly things. They chuse their own ways before God's ways, *Isa.* 66. 3. they had rather cherish their bodies in the enjoyment of the creature, than solace their souls in the enjoyment of God.

Dives qui fieri vult, & citò vult fieri. Juvenal.

3. By the fixedness of their resolution upon earthly things before heavenly. The will of a world-

worldling is fully set upon the world, 1 *Tim.* 6.9. but how wavering is he about Religion? If he hath any faith it is but temporary: if he make profession of Religion, it is but while the Sun shines: and he prosecutes some worldly design when he prosecutes Religion.

4. By the pursuit of their practice after earthly things more than after heavenly. Their endeavours are more to enlarge themselves outwardly, than to enrich themselves spiritually, *Luke* 12.18. *Psal.* 127.2.

5. By the delight they take in earthly things before heavenly. They are better pleased in the bare possessing and keeping these things, than in the using and spending them: As the phrases of the Text import, of going and seeing the ground. They are better pleased in fetching a walk to, or taking a view of their Land, than in spending the Revenue of it to their own and others comfort, for the glory of God. *They must needs go to it.*] This denotes their giving themselves to these things, which God gives unto them. Though at that time they might go to prayer, or to hearing of the word, yet they will be going to their worldly enjoyments. *They must needs see it.*] This denotes their glutting themselves with these things: The lust of

the eyes, 1 *John* 2.16. The most part of that a worldling hath, is but meerly to look upon: and yet the eye is not satisfied with seeing, *Eccles.* 1.8.

6. By the grief of their hearts for the loss and want of earthly things more than of heavenly; sorrowing without hope for the loss of worldly friends, 1 *Thes.* 4. 13. sorrowing without measure many times for the want of some earthly trifles. The danger of the soul's loss is not so grievous to be born, as some petty loss in their outward estate.

Sect. 2.

This cometh to pass.

I. Through that perversenes that is in man's nature, whence it comes to pass

1. That earthly things best suit with man's sensual appetite, *Jam.* 3. 15. these low things agree with mens low and base lusts. Creatures that creep upon the earth, delight to feed upon the earth.

2. Heavenly things are not discerned by mans natural understanding, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. there is a maim, not only in the sensual appetite, but in the intellectuals and higher faculties, so that man cannot see the worth of grace by the light of nature.

II. Through

II. Through that deceitfulness which is in the world, which is as a false *Medium*, that represents things otherwise than they are. The word is as a Looking-Glass, *Jam.* 1. 23. which hath but one side, and represents all faces as they are. But the world is as a Perspective-Glass, which hath two ends; with the one it makes things shew nearer and bigger than they are; with the other it makes things shew farther and less than they are. The world makes earthly things shew bigger than they are, and heavenly things shew less than they are.

III. Through the malice which is in Satan the God of this world, who blinds the eyes of men, that they cannot see things as they are, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. No wonder men do no better, seeing they know no better.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. THis informs us, that worldly men are most erroneous in their principles, and most preposterous in their practices, whilst they look upon earthly things as more necessary than heavenly; when heavenly things are the only necessary, *Luke* 10. 42. with these we may do well enough without other things; without these all other things

Malum est in necessitate vivere, sed in necessitate vivere necessitas nulla est. Sen. Epist. 12.

things are nothing. 'Tis not necessary that we be rich, but necessary that be righteous. *Know ye not, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 9. 'Tis not necessary that we be honourable, but 'tis necessary that we be holy: for *without holiness no man shall see the Lord,* Heb. 12. 14.

Here also see the difference between the worldly man and the Godly man. The Godly man looks upon spiritual things as more necessary than earthly. *Job* esteemed the Word of God as more than his necessary food, *Job* 23. 12. our Saviour said, it was his meat to do the will of him that sent him, *John* 4. 34. *David* lookt upon the word better than gold, *Psal.* 19. 10. So did *Luther*, to whom *Vergerius* was sent by the Pope to offer him a Cardinals Cap, if he would relinquish his opinions. *Luther* answered, I neither care for the favour, nor fury of *Rome.*

Contemptus est a me & favor & furor.

Use 2. Though worldly men do now account earthly things more necessary than heavenly, yet one day they will know the contrary by woful experience; they will find they were miserably deceived, when

when they shall see all these things dissolved, 2 *Pet.* 3. 11. the thought of which should make us more careful about heavenly things, and less sollicitous about earthly.

Use 3. Live contrary to worldly men in reference to earthly and heavenly things.

I. Account earthly things no better than they are.

1. Account them but as necessary in some respect, not as absolutely necessary. They are but convenient supplies for your bodies, and that during this life. The soul hath no need of them here, and the body will have no need of them hereafter, 1 *Tim.* 6. 7.

2. Account them (whiles ye have need of them) not so necessary by far as heavenly things. The earth is the lowest of creatures, and made to be trampled under our feet. And the Primitive Christians laid the price of their possessions at the Apostles feet, *Act.* 4. *ult.* Gold and silver are fitter to set our feet than our hearts upon.

3. Account these earthly things nothing for present use without the word of God's blessing, *Matth.* 4. 4. how is it possible that dead things should sustain our lives without the power of the living God?

4. Account all these things as nothing without Christ, but as a Cypher without a

Figure:

Figure: therefore look upon the sweetness of these things as they come flowing from a God in Covenant, *Hos.* 2.21,22. the love of the giver is more than the gift.

II. Account heavenly things as good as they are.

1. Account them real and substantial, though future and invisible, *Heb.* 11.1. Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and his bloud is drink indeed, *John* 8.36.

2. Account them suitable to your present wants and desires, *Rev.*3. 18. The Rabbines say of the *Israelites* Manna, it was according to every ones taste, this we may say of that Manna that comes down from above, it is according to every ones relish that savoureth the things of the spirit: it is food, it is physick, it is water, wine, milk.

3. Account them full and satisfactory, *Psal.* 16. 11. Think, O Saints, of what you will, and wish for what you will in an orderly way, here is enough to make supply. In heaven God will fully manifest himself, and the soul will fully receive him.

4. Account them as everlasting, not as perishing, look upon them as above the reach of Thief and moth, *Matth.* 6. 20. They are neither exposed to violence from others, nor yet to vanity in themselves. Wherefore live

live above earthly things, let not your hearts be glued to the world. 'Tis against the order of nature for Heaven and Earth to be joyned together: and 'tis against the order of grace for a spiritual soul to be glued to earthly things. The mole that liveth much within the earth, was an unclean creature under the Levitical Law: So were those creatures that did creep upon the earth, *Levit.* 11.30,41. Live up to heavenly things, set your affections on them, *Col.*3. 1. Spiritualize the worldlings speech in my Text, by turning it thus. When worldly temptations come, say, Christ hath purchased a possession for me; my heavenly father hath given an inheritance to me; and I must needs go see it. Then mount upwards in your affections and meditations, and take a view of heaven in the exercise of faith and hope, and longing desires.

CHAP. VII.

I pray thee have me excused.]

IN these words we have the hypocrisie in colouring the excuse, and a very serious piece of hypocrisie it is. Humility

Seria hypocrisis est quæ regat. Marlor. *Humilitas sonat in voce, superbia in actione.* Greg. Magn.

sounds

Ἐεσλαω ab Ἐρως. *Quasi plus vereatur Servum quam dominum.* Salmer.

sounds in the voice, but Pride in the action of this Recusant Guest. *I pray*] the Greek word signifies lovingly to entreat. That is, I desire thee in all loves, that thou wouldest excuse my denyal as well as possibly thou canst. *I pray thee*] as if he did more fear the Servant than the Master. *Have me excused.*] Give in for me as good a reason as you can. I have told you, how full I am of secular affairs, and therefore cannot so attend upon your Master as you would have me, and as others do, who have no such affairs to hinder them. Hence I note,

Observ. That worldlings would fain be exempted from closing with that Gospel-provision unto which they are invited, *Luke* 8. 33, 57.

This appeareth.

I. By mens covert-waving of truth, when they do not openly gainsay it. Thus *Felix* refused St. *Pauls* Doctrine, not by denying the truth of what he spake, but by procrastinating the convenience of the season, *Act.* 24. 25. others, when they appear open gainsayers of truth, yet will they do it in civil terms and carriage. Thus the *Gadarens* besought Christ to depart out of their Coast,

Luke

Luke 8.37. they did not persecute, or thrust him out.

II. By their desiring others to excuse them for not accepting Gospel-invitation, as

1. By what they would have others speak to them, *viz. smooth things*, Isa. 30. 10. that is, flattering words. Sermons of peace and prosperity, which are pleasing to people, which the false Prophets, or falshearted hearers did delight in: Or *General things*, like arrows at rovers, not like arrows at a mark: they cannot endure to have their consciences touched with any particular, or close application.

2. By what they would have others speak of them. As they desire that peace may be spoken to them, so they desire that good may be spoken of them. They would be accounted, and declared, better than they are. But for any so to speak of them, what is it but to speak wickedly for God, and to talk deceitfully for him? *Job* 13.7,8.

3. By what they would have others speak from them, and that to the Lord. When God's hand lies heavy upon them, then they would have others stretch forth their hands in prayer to God for them, confessing what they are, and promising to be better, though their practice

ctice declares they mean not as they speak, *Exod.* 9. 27, 28.

III. By their living contrary to this Gospel-provision. Though they profess they know God, yet in works they deny him, *Tit.* 1. 16. as

1. By halting in their lives, as doubtful what to chuse, whether the broad or the narrow way, 1 *King.* 18. 21. the wavering of their judgment appearing in the unevenness of their practice: the giddiness of their heads appearing in the unsteadiness of their feet. They that dare not openly to confess Christ, they venture secretly to deny Christ.

2. By loitering in their lives, as if they had no mind to go on in the way of Religion, contenting themselves with a dull, formal, *Laodicean* temper: like an Horse in a Mill, that joggs on without any mettle.

3. By falling off from a strict course of life, *Rev.* 2. 5. leaving off the duties, and neglecting the ordinances, which once they were in frequent use of, leaving off the practice of Religion.

4. By wallowing in their lives in that from which they were reclaimed, 2 *Pet.* 2, 22. returning to their impure practices, and turning the grace of God into lascivio usness, living as bad as the worst in all dissoluteness and profaneness.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THe reason why it is so, is because the closing with Gospel-provision requireth that practice of Religion, which crosseth a worldly interest, and is unpleasing to flesh and bloud.

1. Such practice as is difficult to the mind, as *self-examination*, 1 Cor. 11. 28. a strange work to a worldling, who is always in such a hurry of worldly business, that he knows not how to be intent upon this close employment.

2. Such practice as is *irksome to the body*, as *suffering*, Heb. 12. 11. no chastening is joyous but grievous.

3. Such practice as is disparaging to the name, as *hating our nearest relations*, Luke 14. 26. which is accounted barbarous cruelty and unnaturalness. The hating them, is the not permitting them to hinder us in the exercise of our love to Christ.

4. Such practice as is chargeable to the estate, as the maintaining of those in the work of the Ministry, 1 *Cor.* 9. the relieving of those in necessity, 2 *Cor.* 9.

5. Such practice as is expensive of time, as constant attendance upon means of grace,

Act. 26.7. visiting others, watching over others: the worldling is not at leisure for such kind of work.

CHAP. IX.

Use 1. THis informs us, that the world is a great Cheat, it miserably deludes men, and deceives men of that which is of greatest concernment.

1. It deceives men of the word. The people said to *Jeremiah*, we are Lords, we will come no more to thee, *Jer.* 2. 31. we are grown up to a great height, and we need none of thy direction: we are Lords, and can make Laws, and will live by laws of our own making.

2. It deceives men of their hearts, drawing out their affections from God to the creature, *Ezek.* 33. 31. the worldling's heart is as fat as grease, *Psal.* 119. 70. it is dulled with the world; so not only the affections, but the judgment is miserably perverted, so that men cannot esteem of themselves, nor of others as they ought.

3. It deceives men of happiness, drowning men in perdition and destruction, 1 *Tim.* 6.9. A Boat over-laden, over-turns. A back over-burthened, breaks. A soul overcome by

by the world is undone for ever.

Here also ye may see that the worldling is a very fool; so he is called expresly, *Luke* 12. 20. And doth not his practice in our Text prove him one? *I pray thee*, saith he, *have me excused*. The worldling is a fool, because he prefers time before eternity, the body before the soul, and Earth before Heaven: Or if he will be wise, it is but penny-wise, and pound foolish.

Use 2. Though worldlings while they live would fain be exempted from the duty of Saints, yet when they come to die, they would fain partake of the happiness of Saints. *Balaam*, who was ready to curse God's people, desired that at his death he might be blessed with them, *Numb.* 23. 10. It is reported of one, who was a great enemy to that holy man Mr. *Perkins*, that he spake these words at his rial. Well, said he, I could not endure this man while he lived, but now I wish my soul in his souls stead. There be many, who would venture themselves in their condition after death, whose conversation they will not imitate before death.

Use 3. Be exhorted to rectifie your judgment by this truth, do not look upon it as a mercy, always to have what you would have. Think not your case the better, because things are

with you according to your desire. We read of the murmuring *Israelites*, that God gave them their own desire, *Psal.* 78. 29. but they had it with a vengeance.

Rectifie your practice also by this truth. Do worldlings pray to be exempted from Gospel-provision, do you pray and entreat to be received to it. Earnestly desire direction from God's ministers, *Act.* 13. 42. as to the ordering of your conversation, and the obtaining of salvation: and earnestly desire communion with God's people, and subject your selves to those Rules of God's word, by which God's people are to walk. And earnestly desire the benediction of God himself, even that salvation of his whereby he blesseth his own people, *Psal.* 106. 4. and let the truth of your desire herein appear by endeavouring answerably to please God in every thing, walking so as to expect a blessing.

SERM-

SERM. IX.

LUKE 14. 19.

And another said, I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them, I pray thee have me excused.

CHAP. I.

THis verse contains another plea, put in by one of the Guests, who refused to accept of Gospel-provision: and 'tis managed as the former. Here is first the allegation of the plea, then the urging it with some seeming reason, and colouring it with a parcel of fair words. The plea alleged, is a bargain bought of five yoke of Oxen. *Salmeron* interprets these words of those who suffered the loss of eternal life, by too much minding the things of this life in their worldly business. This seems to

In hoc designantur, qui propter negotia justa & emolumenta quæ ex illis percipiunt, vitæ æternæ jacturam faciunt. Salmeron.

be the true sense of the words, by comparing this Text with other Texts of Scripture, which express the usefulness of Oxen, as to mans present life, *Psal.* 144.14. *Prov.*14.4. The ancients dealt much in Cattel, and Oxen were in great esteem with them. Their Goods and Money were denominated from Cattel, because their Riches consisted in Cattel, and their Money was stampt with the image of it. The *Athenians* stampt their Money with the figure of an Ox, as *Macrobius* testifyeth. So that the buying five yoke of Oxen comprehendeth all manner of negotiation in the world. Hence observe,

Peculium & pecunia a pecore.

Observ. That worldly employments are heavenly impediments. These earthly occupations, are spiritual avocations, *Luke* 10.40.

CHAP. II.

Sect. 1.

THese worldly employments, or enjoyments, which are such impediments, are

1. *Worldly callings*: those particular states or conditions of life, wherein men busie themselves about the things of this life: that way

way wherein men trade and traffick one with another for their present subsistence: the abuse of which the Apostle rectifies, 1 *Cor.* 7. 20,21,24. Men are apt to set their particular calling encroach upon their general calling of Christianity, not allowing God that little time which he hath reserved from their particular callings for the exercise of Religious duties.

2. *Worldly possessions*, Matth. 19. 22. This hindered the rich Young man from following Christ. I have bought five yoke of Oxen, saith he in my Text, that is, I have the things of this world about me to busie me. In the former excuse we had the Farm, in this the stock of the Farm. The use of Oxen is partly for food, 1 *King.* 19.21. and the stalled Ox is for a full table, *Prov.* 15.17. *Herodotus* saith, that the *Persians* roasted an Ox whole upon their Birth-day festivals. A full table for the body keeps many from minding the feast of fat things for the soul. Oxen are also for labour, they are strong to labour saith the Psalmist, made use of in the plough and cart. What pains do some take in tillage and carriage, wherein Oxen are made use of, insomuch that they usually slubber over Religious exercises?

3. *Worldly titles:* I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I go to prove them. As there is a proving to try the quality of the beast, so likewise to try the title of the bargain. One of Christs company came to him to have an inheritance divided, but he would not intermeddle with any part of secular Government, but doth part of his own office by preaching against covetousness, *Luke* 12. 13, 14, 15. worldly titles have several writings, sundry conveyances, many flaws belonging to them; and though the writings run, *To have and to hold*, yet there is little hold to be had of many of them.

4. *Worldly discourse*: I have bought five yoke of Oxen, and I must talk of my bargain. *They that are of the world, speak of the world*, 1 John 4.5. follow a worldling from a Sermon, you shall hardly hear him speak one savoury word of all those divine truths which he heard; but follow him from a Fair or Market, ah! how experimentally will he discourse of all worldly commodities.

Sect. 2.

These worldly things prove heavenly impediments in general thus, not causally, but occasionally meeting with mans corruption. More particularly thus.

I. They

I. They occasion the breaking out of several inordinate affections, as

1. Inordinate desires. The more worldlings have, the more they crave: they are like the horsleech, the grave, the barren womb, and the fire, that are never satisfied, *Prov.* 30. 15, 16.

2. Inordinate anger: what wrath and fury is vented by men about the things of this world?

3. Inordinate fear lest they and the things they dote upon, must part from each other.

4. Inordinate sorrow for worldly losses: the rich man in the Gospel, when Christ bid him sell all and give to the poor, was exceeding sorrowful, *Luke* 18.23.

II. They occasion the stopping up the passage to the kingdom of grace; they deprive men of the communion of Saints upon earth, and they occasion the shutting up the gate to the kingdom of glory, *Matth.* 19. 23. *Psal.* 15. The worldling is no inhabitant for heaven.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. SEe here how mans nature within him makes the creature without him such an hinderance to him in heavens way. Hence it comes to pass, that

1. Men

1. Men are grown more Heathenish by the creatures. The *Egyptians* worshipped the Ox as a God, a fine shaped Ox, and the *Israelites* imitated them, *Psal.*106.19,20,21. Men with us worship the Ox also, that is, when men put their confidence in their wealth, consisting of Cattel, as Oxen, Sheep, *&c.* or consisting of Money and Land, in which respect covetousness is called Idolatry, *Colos.* 3.5.

2. Men naturally are more brutish than the creatures. The Ass knows his owner, and the Ox his Masters crib, but man doth not know his Maker and Redeemer, *Isa.* 1.3. the Ox by his lowing shews its dependance upon you, but do you by your praying shew your dependance upon God.

'Tis no mans wisdom then immoderately to desire worldly employments, or to overbusie himself with them, for a man brings himself under a curse by lading himself with thick clay, *Hab.*2.6.

Use 2. For Caution: it is not the meer having of worldly enjoyments, or using of worldly employments, that is any hinderance to a man in heavens way. *Job* had 7000 sheep, 3000 Camels, and 500 yoke of Oxen; he was the greatest man of the *East*, and the holiest man too, *Job* 1.1,2,3. a rare conjunction:

on: great was his piety, because he continued Godly in the midst of his greatness.

Ex ingentibus Jobi divitiis valdè locupletatur ejus sanctitas. Pined. in loc.

Use 3. Then keep within compass in the pursuit of worldly employments, that they may be no impediment to you in heavens way. To this purpose

1. Use right means in getting worldly enjoyments, *Prov.* 21. 5. in buying or selling take heed of over-reaching; get not treasure by a lying tongue. 'Twas a notable speech of *Erasmus*, if he spake in good earnest; that he desired wealth and honour, no more than a feeble horse doth an heavy cloak-bag.

2. In your using worldly enjoyments, make earth subservient to heaven, *Luke* 16. 9. pursue earthly things with an holy indifferency, and improve them for an heavenly end. Moreover, be exhorted to spiritualize this Doctrine by following heavenly employments.

1. Employ your selves about an heavenly calling, *Heb.* 3. 1. in this calling trade at home by divine meditation, and abroad in an exemplary conversation.

2. Employ your selves about heavenly possessions. And here let Christians look at that which they have not only in present possession,

ſeſſion, but alſo in reverſion, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22.

3. Employ your ſelves about an heavenly title, labour to make your Calling and Election ſure; and to clear your title to, and evidences for heaven, by knowing that your names are written in heaven.

CHAP. IV.

And I go to prove them.]

IN theſe words the plea was urged, which was before alledged. *I go*] it is in the preſent tenſe. The worldling thinks there is time enough for heaven, but for the preſent he reſolveth eagerly to purſue the things of this world. The word Δοκιμάζω, ſignifies to make an exact tryal. A metaphor taken from ſearching, or trying metals, or from the practice of men, which examine thoſe that ſtand for an office. Thus this Farmer in the Text was very exact to prove, or try his Oxen, to ſee whether they would bear the yoke, and draw. Here obſerve,

Obſerv. That men are very careful and curious to prove what they have of the things of this world, *Eccl.* 1. 13.

I. This appeareth by the ſeveral things that men do prove.

1. To

1. To begin with that in the Text, the Cattel which men use. If a man buy a yoke of Oxen, he proves them, to see whether they be for his turn: if he buy an horse, he will prove it to see how it goes, or draws.

2. The Land which men occupy. If men buy a field, they will view it, to see the quality of the ground, how good it is. If any controversie arise, they will measure it, to see how much there is of it.

3. The Money that men buy Land or Cattel with, they will try it. Hence we read of Gold tryed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 7. men prove metals by the fire, to separate, and consume the dross: by the touch-stone, to discern good metal from counterfeit: by the scales, to see whether it be full weight.

4. Men will try their food. Their Wheat is measured, *Rev.* 6. 6. and the bread that is made of it is weighed. Physick also is tryed, a *probatum est* doth well at the end of a Receipt.

5. The cloath you wear is tryed; and your leather is sealed in the Market.

6. The very High-ways you travel in, you will have Officers appointed to be Surveyours of them.

II. This also appeareth by the course men take to prove what they have.

1. By

1. By lavishing away much precious time, rising up early, sitting up late in following after these things. Time is precious, and looks at eternity, and 'tis great pity it should be squandered away about trifles, but how apt are men so to do?

2. By commencing costly Suits at Law, to try the title of what they have. Men by their quarrelsome contending thus one with another, shew the weakness of their judgment, and the strength of their passions, 1 *Cor.*6.6,7. methinks it were mens wisest course to try that first, which usually they come to at last, *viz.* a Reference: of those that go to Law, we may say as *Charondas* once did of those that go to Sea: though he wondred not at those that went once, yet he did at those who went again.

3. Wearing their bodies with hard labour: how do men run and ride even to the surfeiting of their bodies for the increasing of their Estates!

4. Wasting their spirits with carking cares, not with a care of diligence, but with a distracting care, arising out of distrust of God's providence, *Phil.*4.6. the care of the event, which belongs to God, not to us, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. this choaks the word, *Matth.* 13. 22. such cares in the mind, are like thorns in the

the flesh, they prick and wound the conscience.

CHAP. V.

THe reasons why men are so careful to prove what they have are these.

1. That they may know what they have: men care not to be at uncertainties about these worldly vanities; they love to know what is their own: though the things themselves be but of an uncertain and perishing nature, yet men love to be at some certainty about them.

2. That they may use what they have. Wherefore is any thing but for some use or other? therefore money is said to answer all things, because with it men may have wherewithall to supply any of their outward wants, *Eccl.* 10.19. money may be turn'd into any thing.

Quid mihi divitiæ, si non conceditur uti?

3. That they may delight in what they have: rejoyce and be merry in what they do enjoy, *Eccl.*3.12. it is well, when good Husbandry and good content can dwell together.

4. That they may hold what they have. Men are apt to gripe hard, and clasp close the things

things of this world, and that they may have the faster hold, they make the surer tryal.

5. That they may the better dispose of what they have: when men can hold their goods no longer in their own hands, yet then they would have it in no other hands but by their appointment. Their substance they leave to their Relations, *Psal.* 17. 14. and their will stands in force when they are gone: and their heirs are careful to prove the will, to make all therein contained more sure unto themselves.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. HEre you may see how worldlings practice will rise up in judgment against them, who are so careful in proving their worldly estate, but take no care at all to prove whether they be in a spiritual estate. They are careful to prove the Oxen they plow with, but are careless in proving the faith they profess with. They will look that the Gold they take be not too light, but take no course that themselves be not too light; and so when God comes to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary, they are found too light, *Dan.* 5. 27.

Here the Saints practice is justified in spiritual things, from the worldlings practice in

in earthly things. If the Farmer in the Text be so diligent to go, and prove the Oxen which he bought, may not the *Bereans* be as diligent to prove the word they have heard, *Act.*17. 11. shall worldly heirs presently go and prove the will of those that have left them an Estate? and shall not the heirs of heaven go and prove the will of their heavenly father? surely it concerns God's children to prove that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God, *Rom.*12.2.

Use 2. For Caution, though some may be too careful, yet others may be too careless in proving what they have of the things of this world. The field of the slothful is overgrown with thorns, *Prov.*24. 30. and so his poverty comes swiftly and irresistibly. *Seneca* called sloth the Nurse of beggary, and the Mother of misery. And *Solomon* calleth the sluggard, brother to the prodigal, *Prov.* 18. 9.

Secondly, though worldlings are so careful to prove what they have, yet they shall not long hold what they have of the things of this world. Riches make to themselves wings, *Prov.*23.5. they were never true (saith one) to those that trusted them.

Use 3. Spiritualize this point: be careful to prove all things in reference to the good of your souls, 1 *Thes.*5.21. O 1. Prove

1. Prove *Doctrines*: as Lapidaries do their stones, as Gold-smiths do their metals. Add to your diligence in hearing, prudence in discerning.

2. Prove *Persons*: try the spirits, 1 *John* 4. 1.

1. Prove *Others*, especially those that bring Doctrines contrary to the Doctrine of Christ. The Scripture tells us, we are not to receive them into our houses, nor bid them God-speed, 2 *Ep. John* 10. let us also prove all private persons, that would have any intimacy of acquaintance and communion with us.

2. Prove *Your selves*: examine and prove your own selves, 2 *Cor.* 13. 5. —1. Prove your heart, be sure that ye be upright in the main, see that you regard not iniquity in your heart, *Psal.* 66. 18.—2. Prove the graces that are seated in your heart: try the truth of them. 1. Try the truth of your faith by the effectualness of it, 1 *Thes.* 2.13. That is effectual, which attains its end. Now the end of saving faith is to receive Christ, as he is offered in the Gospel. That is also effectual faith, which worketh by love. 2. Prove the truth of your repentance by the spiritualness of its sorrow, a sorrow according to God, 2 *Cor.* 7.10.

3. Prove

3. Prove the truth of your obedience by the universality of it, *Psal.* 119. 6. look at commands as they come from God, and not as they suit with your interest.

CHAP. VII.

I pray thee have me excused.]

HEre we meet with the same words we had before. Before we considered the words more generally, now we shall consider them more particularly, as to [*Thee*] and [*Me*] in the words, with the manner of the excuse. I pray [*Thee*] the messenger sent, who is as well the peoples mouth to God, as well as God's mouth to the people. Have [*Me*] excused. *Me*] that am no wilful opposer of what you say, that do not dissuade others from receiving what I refuse, and that do give you a reason for my refusal. *Have me excused.*] Give in some reason to the Master of the feast, that I may suffer no damage by my refusal: or manage the reason well for me that I have

Si inimici fuissent, non rogassent, ut excusarentur, sed temerè respondissent. Marlor. in loc.

Παραίτη qui ex parte in causa est ὁ αἰτίαν παρέχων, qui causam assignat prop-

 alledg-

ter quam. So *Plutarch* useth the word. alledged. So much the Greek word for [*Excused*] importeth.

Sect. 1.

Observ. There be those, who are no wilful opposers, nor yet true receivers of the Gospel-message, that presume they shall fare the better for Gospel-messengers. And they be such as these,

1. Such as do not condemn the Doctrine of the Gospel, as *Gallio*, who was not like those wicked *Jews*, who haled St. *Paul* to the judgment-seat, to have his person condemned for that Doctrine which they had condemned, *Act.*18.12,13.

2. Such as do not abide insensible under the preaching of the Gospel, but come to convictions, and semi-perswasions, convinced of the truth of what is spoken, and almost perswaded to close with it, as *Agrippa*, Act. 26.27,28.

3. Such as do not persecute Gospel-preachers, nor think them fit to be persecuted. As those hearers of St. *Paul*, who said, This man doth nothing worthy of death or bonds, *Act.*26.31,32. These were not so furious, as those Elders with their Oratour *Tertullus*, who called *Paul* all to naught, *Act.*24.5.

4. Such

4. Such as do not dissuade others from the profession of the Gospel; they are not so furious and imperious, as to tyrannize over the consciences of others.

Sect. 2.

Now that those who are not wilful opposers, yet are no fast friends of the Gospel may thus appear,

1. Though they do not condemn the Doctrine of the Gospel, yet if they do not obey it, they do not receive it by faith, nor express it in an holy life. St. *Pauls* Doctrine came to the conscience of *Felix* to awaken and affright him, but he would not let it come to his heart to rectifie and reform him: he could not but receive that Doctrine in the fear of it, but would not receive it in the love of it.

2. Though they may reform something, yet they will not reform every thing that is amiss. *Herod* in hearing and seeing *John*, did many things, yet he would not part with his *Herodias*, Mark 6.20.

3. Though they do not persecute the preachers of the Gospel, yet they do not prize them, so as to improve the advantage by them, neither are they much troubled when others do abuse them, like *Gallio*, caring for none of these things, *Act.* 18.17.

4. Though they dissuade not others from the profession of the Gospel, yet they dishearten others by their careless practice. The example of some hath a special influence into the practice of others.

Now these presume to fare the better for Gospel-messengers by their seeking to, or for the Ministers, when they are in distress, as *Saul* did for *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 28.15. when men are in danger, or near to death, then they would have a word of petition spoken for them; a word of counsel spoken to them; a word of approbation spoken of them. Then they cry, oh Sir! pray for me, speak some words of comfort to me; what think you of me, *&c?*

The grounds of this their presumption are these.

1. They presume upon their eating and drinking in the presence of Christ and his Ministers, *Luke* 13.26. which may be understood, either civilly, or spiritually. If civilly, then they presume upon their acquaintance with the messengers of the Gospel: eating and drinking is a sign of familiarity. Thus many may think, they shall fare the better for their acquaintance with such and such ministers, whom they have invited to their table, whom they did familiarly discourse and converse with. If spiritually; then they presume

ſume upon their participation of Goſpel-ordinances with them; they think to fare the better for thoſe miniſters, who as God's meſſengers have diſtributed meat and drink at the Lords table. But thoſe that partake of the ſign of the body and bloud of Chriſt, and not of the thing ſignified, will be miſerably deceived.

2. They preſume upon the teaching of God's miniſters among them, that is, they reſt upon the enjoyment of a good miniſter. Some cry out, we have a good Church-man in our Pariſh; we have one that tells us the truth, and takes pains with us, and ſo by the grace of God we ſhall do well enough; though they never mind the walking anſwerable to their teaching.

CHAP. VIII.

Uſe 1. THis informs us, that the apprehenſions of natural men are very much darkened for the preſent: they think to fare the better for the meſſengers of the Goſpel, though they refuſe the meſſage of the Goſpel: as though miniſters were mediators, to give God a ranſome for their hearers. This ſhews us alſo, that ſuch mens expectations will be very much fruſtrate for the fu-

ture: They will not be advantaged by another, who have no grace for themselves, *Matth.*25. 8, 9. The just shall live by *His* faith, *Habak.* 2. 4. Every one must give an account for himself in his own person for what he hath done in the flesh, 2 *Cor.* 5. 10. men cannot be Advocates one for another at God's Tribunal, to make a bad cause good by colouring it over with a few fair words.

Use 2. For Caution: Though some do vainly presume to fare the better for Gospel-messengers, yet others may truly hope to fare the better for them, *viz.* such as receive the Gospel-message. For as whatsoever the faithful ministers of the Gospel do bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: so whatsoever they shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven, *Matth.*16.19. that is, *declaratively*, pronouncing the sentence of God's word, either for, or against men according to the ways they walk in: for what any minister doth beside the Rule, is of no force.

Use 3. Then do not think to fare the better for Gospel-ministers, if ye refuse the message of the Gospel: if you slight the news of the Gospel; then know, though the most eminent servants of God were residing with you, they could do you no good. Though *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Job* were among you, they should

ſhould but deliver their own ſouls, *Ezek.* 14. 14,16,20. Theſe were perſons eminent in holineſs, high in the favour of God; yet *Noah* could not keep off the flood from the old world, nor *Daniel* the captivity from the *Iſraelites*, nor *Job* the ſtroke from his children. Again, *though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me*, ſaith the Lord, *yet my mind could not be toward this people.* Yea, though the prayers of the moſt eminent ſervants of God were pouring out for you, they could do you no good. *Sodom* was deſtroyed notwithſtanding *Abraham's* prayer for it. Moreover, though ye have the Books and Writings of the moſt eminent miniſters, read them, and know them, yet if you do not live according to them, all is nothing.

Receive ye the meſſage of the Goſpel truly, that ſo ye may fare the better for God's miniſters eternally. Receive it as it is indeed the word of God, and not of man, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 13. receive it with the exacteſt attention and reverence, and with the moſt abſolute faith and credence. Many hearers regard the word no more than as a tale that is told them. Oh receive it in the love of it, which is the way to be ſaved by it, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10. light in the law of God in the inner man. Truth is the food of the mind, let your hearts be

be pleased with it, as your palats are with delicious food. Receive it in the practice of it, shew it forth in your lives, that you may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, *Phil.* 1. 11.

SERM. X.

Luke 14. 20.

And another said, I have married a Wife, and therefore I cannot come.

CHAP. I.

THese words contain a third excuse, which another of the Gospel-refusers makes: in which we have first the allegation of the plea, then the peremptorineſs in urging it. The plea alledged is, *I have married a wife.*] In this (as in the former) the fault is in the abuse of what is lawful. The marrying of a wife is lawful, and very expedient, but the hindring a mans self by it in the way to heaven is very bad. There

Innumeri sunt, qui propter uxores, pericrunt, & plurimæ uxores, quæ propter

There are many that perish because of their wives, and many wives are thrust into hell because of their husbands, they keeping one another back from good, or provoking one another unto evil by their words and actions contrary to the power of godliness. Hence I note, *Sect.* 1.

viros in gehennæ supplicium detrusæ sunt. Salmer.

Observ. There be those who are hindered by their marriage from the true receiving of the Gospel-message: or they hinder themselves in their marriage, *Luke* 17. 27. It is said of those in the old world, *They ate, they drank, they married.* An elegant *Asyndeton*, that is, they followed these things without intermission, as if they had nothing else to do; men are thus hindered,

I. By perverting the ordinance of marriage, their corruption making that an hinderance, which God's institution made an help.

1. The help is to maintain society, God thought it not fit that a man should be alone, and therefore made him a meet companion, *Gen.* 2.18. the hinderance then is, when conjugal society justleth out spiritual society. I have married a wife, and I must keep her company, and with this pretence the company

ny of Saints is neglected by some, as likewise conference with God, and serious meditation, and secret prayer. Though it be bad for men to withdraw themselves from their wives company, to associate themselves with strangers, yet 'tis good for them to retire themselves, that they may give themselves to fasting and prayer, 1 *Cor.* 7. 5. and so proportionably to any other spiritual exercise, as occasion serveth, whether ordinary, or extraordinary, private or publick duty.

2. The help is to increase delight: one main work of marryed persons is to study to please one another, 1 *Cor.* 7. 33, 34. to care or cast in their mind every way how to give best content. The hinderance then is, when men are so over-busy in pleasing their wives, that they are very negligent about pleasing God. To please a wife in the neglect of a spiritual duty, which displeaseth God, will be but cold comfort in the end.

3. The third help is to raise a family Male and Female God hath joyned together, that others like to them may come from them, *Gen.* 5. 2, 3. The hinderance then is, when men are so diligent to build up their own families, that they neglect the building up of God's family.

Hic cura rei familiaris impeditur. Marlor.

family. I have married a wife, and I must provide for her, and those that come of her: but God hath his family, *Eph.* 3. 14, 15. and men ought to take care how they and theirs may be added to, and brought up in that family. When family-affairs hinder Church-affairs; when generation hinders regeneration; when the natural issue hinders spiritual issue, then marriage is abused.

4. The fourth help is to prevent sin: Man is to take a wife that he may not go to an harlot, nor continue burning in his natural filth. Marriage is a remedy against incontinency, 1 *Cor.* 7. 2. A benefit since the fall. The whole need no Physician, neither needed man this Physick before the fall, when he was in perfect health: the hinderance is, when instead of preventing sin, there is provoking unto sin. I have married a wife, and I must enjoy her: So the man doth glut himself with carnal pleasure, that the mind is mudded, and very much besotted, insomuch that the clear sight of spiritual things is very much hindered thereby. The matrimonial conjunction how might it be spiritualized by the consideration of that secret and delightful oneness between Christ and

Conjugium institutum ante lapsum sanis ad officium, post lapsum ægrotis ad remedium. August.

and the Church, but alas! how is it abuſed by many in the obſcenity of their ſpeech, and unnaturalneſs of their actions with their own wives, contrary to that ſpiritual uſe of the marriage-bed, *Eph.* 5. 31. 32.

II. By being perverted by them whom they have marryed: though the marrying a wife be no hindrance, yet the marrying of ſome wife is a great hindrance. I have marryed a wife, even ſuch a wife as hinders me. This made *Iſaac* and *Rebekah* take the more care for the matching of their ſon *Jacob*, Gen. 27. 46. & 28. 1.

Sect. 2.

Queſt. *But what kind of wives are thoſe that are an hinderance to their husbands in good?*

Reſp. 1. The *domineering wife*: ſuch a one was *Jezabel*, 1 King. 21. 7. and of her husband it is ſaid, there was none like *Ahab* for wickedneſs, *whom* Jezabel *his wife ſtirred up*, ver. 25. ſhe was very imperious, and furious againſt the Prophets and people of God, and her husband a great perſecutor by her means.

Uxori nubere nolo meæ. Mart.

2. The *contentious wife*, which the Scripture compares to a continual dropping, like as a man that

Conjugium conjurgium.

that hath met with hard usage abroad, thinks to mend himself at home, but is no sooner sate down there, but the rain dropping through the roof upon his head, drives him out of doors again, *Prov.* 19. 13. This is like a tempest in the haven, most troublesome, and most dangerous.

3. The *flattering wife*, like *Delilah*, *Judg.* 16. 5, 6. who like a snake winds about a man to ruine him, who insinuates into her husbands affection, the better to procure his destruction.

4. The *scoffing wife*. This cross *David* met with, 2 *Sam.* 6. 16. it is sad when a godly husband meets with a jeering and scoffing wife: but let such wives know, God hath a barren womb for a scoffing *Michol*.

5. The *coy wife*. *Job* was exercised with this temptation, but was not overcome with it, yet 'twas bitter to him, when his breath was strange to his wife, *Job.* 19. 17. she was so coy, that she could not bear her husbands sores. Yet history tells us of a contrary rare example, the Lady *Eleanor*, wife to King *Edward* I. who suckt out the poison out of her husband, who was treacherously wounded, and so healed him, and hurt not her self.

6. The *discontented wife*, such a one was *Lot's* wife, she was not willing to leave *Sodom*,

dom, but looked back contrary to God's command, and was turn'd into a pillar of salt: her sin seems to be compounded of many sins, as curiosity, foolish pity, covetousness, and lothness to leave such a pleasant countrey, but all through discontent with, or at Gods word and works.

7. The *whorish wife*, Luke 3. 19. A dishonest woman contemneth shame, this causeth sorrow and bitterness to her husband.

CHAP. II.

Relationes sunt minimæ entitatis, sed maximæ efficaciæ.

Use 1. HEre see the great force of near relations, they have a special influence into the lives of men, either to their making or marring. If rightly set, they are very advantageous, if mis-placed, they are very pernicious. Some match in a family, what a blessing doth it bring? Again, some match, what a curse doth it bring? The one God hath appointed one woman, and no more for one man, every one therefore had need to look to that one, *Mal.* 2. 15. This is the first pair, and original of all others.

Here also we may see the great abuse of near relations, either in the entring into them,

them, or in the exercise of them. When people marry unsuitably, or live unwarrantaby with them whom they marry. Some marry only by their eyes, *Gen.* 6. 2. beauty is a dangerous bait, and lust is sharp-sighted: here it is good with *Job* to make a covenant with the eyes, and with *Nazianzen* to nurture the eyes, to bind them to their good behaviour: not, but that a mans wife may be like *Ezekiels*, the delight of his eyes: it is wisdom surely for parties to look upon one another, as such pleasing objects, that their eyes may be taken off from all others. Again, some chuse meerly for money, as though the excrements of the earth were of the essence of marriage: their affections being manacled with money, rather than wedded to the person.

Use 2. Yet there be some, who are not hindered, but furthered by their marriage in receiving the Gospel-message. *Manaoh* had a good wife, *Judg.* 13. 23. she spake experimentally to her husband of God's goodness. *Nazianzen* saith, that his Mother was not only an help to his Father in matters of piety, but a Doctress and governess, yet his Father was an able Minister of the Gospel. *Budæus* that Learned French-man, had a great help of his wife in points of Learning. *Placilla* the Empress was a singular help to her husband

Theodosius in things both temporal and spiritual. And some churlish men who will not be bettered by their wives, yet they are kept out of harms way by their good wives, as *Nabal* by *Abigail*.

Then further, marriage is not to be blamed: men may be pious, and freed from worldly entangements in a marryed as well as in a single life. 'Tis said of *Enoch*, that he walked with God, after he begat *Methusalah*, *Gen.* 5.22. Matrimonial acts need be no hinderance to spiritual exercise.

CHAP. III.

Use 3. THe third use shall be of exhortation.

I. *To the unmarryed.*

1. While ye continue in your single life, be contented with it, 1 *Cor.* 7. 27. consider from this Doctrine, you had better have no wife than some wife. Of *Sylla* the *Roman* 'tis said, *Fœlix fuisset, si uxorem non habuisset*: pity those that have their pull-backs.

2. When you intend to alter your single life into a marryed estate, see that first ye be marryed to the Lord, according to the Covenant of grace, *Hos.* 2. 20. 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. then look to her whom you marry, that you marry in

in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 7. 39. which that you may do, seek a wife of the Lord, for a good wife is God's gift, *Prov.* 19. 14. and a special favour, *Prov.* 18. 22. seek her then by prayer, *Gen.* 24. 12. and by advising with good friends, and let those who have Parents, take their counsel: and let all concern'd in such a business, look more to goodness than goods.

II. *To the marryed.*

I. To the husband.

1. Live as a man of knowledge with thy wife, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. the husband is the head, and where should knowledge be but in the head? but how sad is it to see such headless heads, such ignorant husbands as there be in many families?

2. Live as a man of affection, let every husband love his wife, *Eph.* 5. 23. let him shew it in protecting her from injuries, the husband is to be the wives safeguard, *Eph.* 5. 25. let him provide for her conveniences. This duty St. *Paul* expresseth by two significant words, *nourishing* and *cherishing*: the former referring to food, the latter to raiment, as *Zanchy* noteth; both which the man ought to afford his wife according to his degree.

כִּבֵּן *alam significat.* Buxtorf.

Ἐκτρέφει καὶ θάλπει. Eph. 5. 29.

degree. Let him bear with her infirmities as the weaker vessel, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7.

2. *To the Wife.*

Nunquam erit voluntaria subjectio, nisi praecedat reverentia. Marlor.

Let her see, that she reverence her husband, *Eph.* 5. 33. inwardly, let her have an high esteem of her husband: outwardly, let her gestures, words, and actions have reverence stamped on them. There is good reason why the woman should be in subjection, because she was last in the creation, and first in the transgression.

3. *To Husband and Wife.*

Are you unequally yoked, yet part not one from the other, but seek to win one the other to the faith, 1 *Cor.* 7. 12. Are you equally yoked in the Lord, bless God for it, and draw evenly together in Christs yoke: live as the heirs of the grace of life, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. be weaned from Relations while you do enjoy them, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. Consider, that Relations must shortly be dissolved by death: the time is short. The persons related must be parted for ever, if one be a believer, and the other an unbeliever. Not only two in the field, or fellow-travellers: two in the mill,

or

or work-fellows; but two in the bed, or bed-fellows; the one shall be taken, the other left; the one taken to God; the other left to the Devil. Δύο ἐπὶ κλίνης μίας.

CHAP. IV.

And therefore I cannot come.

Sect. 1.

HEre is the peremptorinesse in urging the plea: *and therefore I cannot come*] *viz.* because I have marryed a wife.

Inurbanus est voluptati vacans, ideò cæteris pejus respondit. Salmer.

The reason indeed is, because he was marryed or wedded to the world. This answer is very saucy, and more unmannerly than the former. It is as if he should have said in plain terms to the ministers of the Gospel, you may even save your labour to invite, for this is the shortest and the longest as we say, *I cannot come.* Hence I note,

Obser. That those that are wedded to the world, are peremptory in refusing the word. The things of the world unto which men are wedded are these.

1. The honour of the world, unto which the ambitious man is wedded, which the A-

postle calls *the pride of life*, 1 John 2. 16. when the mind aspireth after Dignities and Titles, meerly to advance the name of a man, gaping after preferment, disquieted without it, domineering with it.

2. The wealth of the world, to which the covetous man is wedded, running greedily for reward, *Jude* ver. 11. ἐξεχυθησαν. the Greek word signifies a pouring forth like water, importing the impetuousness and violence of the mind after gain: when no bounds or banks can put a stop to their over-flowing desires.

3. The pleasure of the world, to which the voluptuous, or luxurious man is wedded, wholly taken up with carnal delights, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. meerly sensual; satiating and pampering themselves with the creature, omitting nothing that may make them compleat Epicures, giving themselves to such excess, that instead of feeding their bodies, they feed their lusts, to the great prejudice of their souls.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

To be wedded to the world, is

Sect. 1.

1. TO forsake all that is good to enjoy the world. Those that are marryed, do forsake all to enjoy one another: Thus the worldling (*Demas*-like) leaves all for the love of the world, 2 *Tim.* 4. 10. As a true Christian forsakes all temporals, honour, profit, pleasure, for God; so the worldling forsakes all spirituals for the world: Saints, Churches, Ordinances; let all go from him, or he will go from all, that he may take faster hold of the world.

2. To give a man's self to the world. Those that are marryed, do give themselves one to the other, resigning up the power or use of their bodies each unto the other, 1 *Cor.* 7. 4. A man that is wedded to the world bringeth himself under the power of the world: the world may do with him what it will. The natural man walks according to the course of this world, *Eph.* 2. 2.

3. To cleave close unto the world. The marryed man is said to cleave to his wife, *Matth.* 19. 5.

19.5. to be as the Greek word signifies, glued to her: he that is wedded to the world, is glued to the world: and those things that are glued, are hardly parted. The worldling's heart is set upon worldly things, oh 'tis hard coming between to take off the affection from the object.

περοκολλήθησεται.

4. To make provision for the world, even for these worldly affections within a man: he that lives like a marryed man, nourisheth and cherisheth his wife as his own flesh, *Eph.* 5.29. Now as there is natural flesh, so there is sinful flesh. This is the flesh that a man, wedded to the world, nourisheth and cherisheth, making provision for it, which St. *Paul* forbids, *Rom.* 13.14. As some neglect the body by too severe abstinence, weakening it as to the exercise of godliness; so many more do cherish the body by too great indulgence, strengthning it to the acts of wickedness. The other neglect a friend: These harbour an enemy.

Sect. 2.

The peremptorinesss of these worldlings against the word appeareth in these things.

1. They shut their eyes against the word, in seeing they see not, *Matth.* 13. 13. they shut the window, that the light may not come in.

in. They cannot but see (so clearly doth the Gospel shine) yet will they not see; their minds are so prejudiced against the truth.

2. They stop their ears against the word; hearing they hear not; they hear a sound, but no distinct sound. They are like the deaf Adder, or Asp, that stops her ear at the voice of the charmer, *Psal.* 58.4,5. who when she perceiveth the charmer, layeth one of her ears close upon the ground, and covereth the other with her tail, because she will not hear the charms.

Audientes corporis sensu, non audiunt cordis assensu. Aug.

3. They open their mouths against the word, as those wicked *Jews*, who spake against those things which were spoken by S. *Paul*, *Act.* 13. 45. This is blasphemy, defaming God himself, casting aspersions upon his most reverent name.

4. They trample with their feet upon the word: these swinish Epicures do trample upon that Pearl of price, that is brought to them in the Gospel-message, *Matth.* 7. 6. they feed so greedily upon the garbage of carnal contentments, that they despise spiritual enjoyments.

Quest. *Why are worldlings so peremptory against the word?*

Resp.

Resp. 1. They cannot be for the word and the world too, *Luke* 16. 13. seeing therefore they will be for the world, they cannot be for the word: he that is marryed to one, cannot be marryed to another, till he be disjoyned from the former, while the heart is set upon the world, it cannot at the same time be set upon the word.

2. The word is very strict against them, it threatens damnation to them that mind earthly things, *Phil.* 3. 19. the worldling hates the word, because the Scripture speaks not one syllable of good to a worldling so abiding.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. HEre ye may see, that worldly temptations are very dangerous: man's nature is ready to close with them, and the closing with them undoes a man. A wedge of gold, and an *Achan's* eye, may cost a man his life: a worldly proffer meeting with a worldly heart may cost a man his soul.

Here also ye may see, that the world doth choak the word, *Luke* 8. 7. it hindereth the growth of it, so that the love of the world is not seated in the heart, neither doth the fruit of it appear in the life: hence it is, that many who

who increase in worldly riches, do decrease as to their spiritual profession.

Use 2. Yet there is a delight in worldly enjoyments, which may well stand with a delight in God's word. 'Tis lawful, not only to have, and use the things of this world, but to rejoyce in the same, *Eccles.*3. 12, 13. so that we keep within the bounds of sober delight, and our mirth degenerate not into that laughter which is madness. But 'tis as hard to bear much prosperity, as to drink much wine, and not be giddy.

Yet there be those who are wedded to the world, that seemingly comply with the word, drawing near to God with the mouth, whose heart is far from him, *Isa.* 29. 13. whose heart goes after their covetousness, and after their carnal lusts.

Use. 3. Then live as those who are not wedded to the world, that it may appear ye refuse not the word.

1. Be weaned from the world, *Psal.* 131. 2. the world is a distempered body, and its breasts cannot afford wholesome milk. Use earthly things with an holy indifferency, use all worldly things with much moderation and sobriety, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30. with a kind of non-attendancy, reserving the bent of your wills, and vigour of your spirits for heavenly objects.

objects. Use them likewise with an holy jealousie, lest they should deceive you of better: be not sensual in your sensible delights, like those who feed upon the sweetness of the creature without fear, *Jude* v. 12. but sanctifie your enjoyments by daily prayer, that ye may be delivered from the snare of them.

2. Be crucified to the world. The world is crucified to me, saith St. *Paul*, and I unto the world, *Gal.* 6.14. that is, the world and I are well agreed: the world cares not for me, and I care as little for the world: labour to have your affections and lusts so crucified and deaded, that worldly temptations do not draw them out: he that is dead, is freed from sin. Love not the world, so as to sin for its sake: be not so fond of the world, as though you could not live without it: be not drawn from your duty by it.

Live also like those who are ready to receive the word, that it may appear ye are not wedded to the world.

1. Be wedded to Christ according to the ministry of the word, it serveth to that end and purpose, 2 *Cor.* 11. 2. the Church made up of believers is the Lamb's wife.

2. Be observant of Christ according to the laws of marriage; study to please him, be wil-

willing to do any thing for him, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. and he will do any thing for you, *Hos.* 2. 19, 20. Consider, that all the outward excellencies of the world are to be had in the enjoyment of Christ in a more eminent manner: with him there is the honour of a Crown, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. what greater honour? the profit of a treasure, *Col.* 2. 3. many treasures, the pleasure of a Paradise, *Luke* 23. 43. all delights that are desirable. Besides, the beauty of the world is soon over, but the fruits of the word abide for ever, 1 *Pet.* 1. 24, 25.

SERM. XI.

LUKE 14. 21.

So that servant came, and shewed his Lord these things, &c]

CHAP. I.

IN these words we have. 1. The return of the messenger. 2. the report that he maketh. *So that servant*], he who was sent about that Gospel-errand fore-mentioned:

Dicuntur Παρεγίνεσθαι *qui adsunt alicui in judicio ut Advocati.* Thus *Plato* useth the word. Παρεγίνεσθαι δίκῃ: *sisti judicio.*

ned: *came*] The Greek word signifies to be present, or to stand up as in a Court of Justice, like an Advocate, one called, and coming to a Tribunal, as well to accuse and implead another, as to excuse and defend another. Thus this servant that was sent forth, came from the Pulpit to the Bar, from inviting to accusing: he came, and stood before God's Tribunal, to give him an account of the particular answers given in by the refusers of the Gospel-message, that so they might receive their doom.

Observ. That the messengers of the Gospel do return from them who refuse the Gospel, unto him that sent them to preach the Gospel. They return from mens refusal to God's Tribunal. For the clearing of this, we must take the meaning of [*servant*] in this verse, as it was taken in ver. 17.

I. That servant eminently.] The Angel of the Covenant, the great messenger of the Gospel, Jesus Christ: he returned to his father after he was refused by the world: he returned by his Ascension, and this Christ calls a going to his father, and to his God,

Reversus est Christus ad patrem per ascensionem, & nuntiavit patri per plagas efficaciter loquentes a

God, *John* 20. 17. And it was Christ's manner, when he was a preacher upon the earth to withdraw himself from them, who would not draw nigh to him by closing with means of grace which he brought..

majoribus Judæorum per Gentiles inflictas. Salmer. in loc.

II. That servant collectively] or those particular servants and messengers of the Gospel sent from God through Christ in any particular age of the world, to any particular people, as

1. The *Patriarchs*. *Enoch* prophesied against ungodly livers in his time, and then God took him, *Jude* ver. 14. 15. *Noah*, that preacher of righteousness, 2 *Pet.* 2. 5. did not always call upon the old world to amend their lives, but in the end condemned them in the presence of God, after they had refused the word of God, *Heb.* 11. 7.

2. The *Prophets*: Thus *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, made their complaint to God for the obstinacy of their hearers.

3. The *Apostles*, when instead of being received, they were threatned and persecuted by men, then they appealed unto God, *Act.* 4. 24, 29. they betook themselves to his tribunal, they delivered their enemies over into his hand. The ministers of the Gospel since are

are to take the same course.

CHAP. II.

NOw the manner of this return of the messengers of the Gospel from the refusers of the Gospel, is

1. The removal of the persons of those messengers, either from one place to another here in this world. When *Paul* preached at *Athens*, and some mockt his Doctrine, and others did not readily receive it; it is said, so *Paul* departed from among them, *Act.* 17. 32,33. The obstinacy of many hearers drives away their Teachers from them — on from this world to the world to come: *The Prophets do not live for ever*, Zech. 1. 5, 6. They spend their breath upon many, who ill requite them, and gain no good by them, and God stops their breath the sooner.

2. The withdrawing God's presence from the labours of those Ministers, so that their labours profit not. Though the ordinances in their dispensation are continued, yet the exciting & assisting motions of the spirit are withdrawn, so that men become as the withered branches of a Vine, *John* 15.5,6. no sap, nor vigour in them, or the faculties of their souls about spirituals, are like the wheels of a watch

watch when the ſpring is broke, or when it is not wound up. And hence it is, that inſtead of doing them any good, both the Doctrine and praying of Gods meſſengers is againſt them.

1. *Now the office of theſe Goſpel meſſengers requires this.*

They are Embaſſadours, 2 *Cor.* 5.20. therefore when their meſſage is not received, their manner is to return home; eſpecially when beſides the refuſal of the meſſage, the meſſenger is abuſed. St. *Matthew* tells us, that theſe refuſers did not only ſlight the Supper, but ſpightfully entreated the ſervants who invited them, *Mat.* 22.5,6. wherefore open War is proclaimed, the Embaſſadours being abuſed,

2. *The commiſſion of theſe meſſengers requires this.*

This direction is in their commiſſion, if any receive them not, or hear not their word, then they are to depart from them, and to ſhake off the duſt of their feet againſt them. *Matth.* 10. 14. Theſe two things are due to the Miniſters of the Goſpel. *Maintenance*, and *Audience*: the one reſpects their perſons, the other their Doctrine. Now, if thoſe among whom they come, refuſe to receive them, then they muſt depart from them: if

they will not maintain them, house them, harbour them, then they must seek out for entertainment elsewhere. The work-man is worthy of his meat, *ver.* 10. of all things necessary for this life, for him and his family.— Again, if those among whom they come, refuse to hear their words, then they are to shake off the dust of their feet against them. The meaning of that phrase is,

1. To shew, that these messengers sought not theirs, but them, they would not carry away so much as any of their dust.

2. To shew, they would have no more to do with them, they would wait no longer upon them. The dust of those feet that should have been beautiful, shall be fatal against them.

3. To shew, how God would break them to pieces, and crumble them (as it were) into dust, *Psal.* 2. 9. or trample upon them like the dust. They did as it were raise the dust, and make a steem against the messengers of the Gospel in token of despite; therefore they shall be as it were trod upon as the dust under foot, in token of contempt.

4. To shew, how little they esteemed the greatest persons that refused the Gospel, even no more than the dust of their feet.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us, that God's ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, *Gen.6.* 3. with perverſe men, by preaching, diſputing; convincing in the mouths of his meſſengers, nor by inward checks and motions which they have ſleighted. And let men know, that they ſhall hear of their miſdemeanours again, who refuſed the Goſpel under any meſſenger of God, now dead and gone. The meſſengers are gone to God to do their errand. Men are ready to flatter themſelves, by thinking, when the Miniſter is removed, they ſhall hear of their faults no more. Alas! be not deceived. *Abels* bloud cryed when he was dead, *Gen.*4.10. and as there is a voice in the bloud of Martyrs, ſo there is a voice in the Doctrine of preachers after they are dead and gone.

Use 2. Yet God doth ſometimes continue his meſſengers among thoſe that are obſtinate, *Ezek.*2.5. though they grow worſe by it, yet they ſhall enjoy it; ſurely, it will be to make them the more inexcuſable. Here is one of the depths of God's judgments, that thoſe enjoy the means, who grow worſe by the ſame, and thoſe want the means, who

would grow better by the same: but Christ pronounceth the severer wo against such, *Matth.* 11. 21. who abuse that means which others would improve.

On the other hand, though those that refuse the Gospel, cause Ministers to go from them; yet those that receive the Gospel cannot always keep Ministers with them. St. *Paul* was called away from those that wept sore at his departure, *Act.* 20. 37, 38. Christ hath the stars in his right hand, and he placeth, and displaceth them according to his pleasure. They that are glad at the sight of their Minister, must arm themselves for this affliction; their minister must be removed out of their sight.

Use 3. Refuse not the Gospel, when brought to you by the messenger of the Gospel. Continue not in your unbelief, hearing the Doctrine of faith preached to you, do not reject the word: receive the message of the Gospel now it is tendred to you in the ministry of the word. The messengers of the Gospel will not always continue. Walk in the light, while ye do enjoy the light, *John* 12. 35. believe in Christ, who is the true light, *ver.* 36. be guided by the spirit of God according to the word of God: follow the Doctrine and examples of Gods faithful messengers, who are called

called the light of the world, *Matth.* 5. 14. obey them that have the rule over you, submit to them that watch for your souls. Associate your selves with the children of light, 1 *Thes.* 5. 5. maintain intimate familiarity with them whose words are pure, whose lives are shining. Be ye perfecting holiness on earth by way of preparation for the perfection of holiness in heaven: every degree of grace, is a step to glory.

CHAP. IV.

And shewed his Lord these things.]

HAving heard the return of the messenger, we are now to hear the report that is made. *And shewed.*] The Greek word, Ἀναγγέλλω, signifies to relate, or to bring back again an answer to a message that was sent. A word frequently made use of by humane writers in that language. Poets, Orators, Historians, Moralists: and by some in this sense to make report as Embassadours do when they return from their embassage. So that great Moralist makes use of the word, which sense suits well with our Text. *His Lord*] that is, he who made the feast, and sent him as a messenger to invite. *These things,*]

that is, the very naked truth of those several excuses, as they were given in by the Recusant Guests, without any excusing of their excuses.

Obser. That the messengers of the Gospel do relate unto God those answers which are made by the refusers of the Gospel.

The answers made by the refusers of the Gospel we heard before in the examination of their several excuses: now let us see how the messengers do relate, or shew these things unto their Lord.

1. By producing the commission they had to speak in God's name: they shew unto their Lord the dispatching of their errand according to his mind. He that had the five talents, said, Lord, thou deliveredst to me five talents, and behold, thus and thus I have made use of them. And so he that had the two, *Matth.* 25. 20, 22. Lord, saith the preacher, Thou didst put me into such an office. Thou didst endue me with such gifts, and I did execute that office, and employ those gifts among such a people, I wholly gave up my self to the work.

Here be those I spake among, let them deny it, if they can.

2. By declaring what, and how they spake by vertue of that commission. They shew unto

to their Lord the Scripture they preached, the Texts they handled, the Argumens they used, the affection they expressed in the discharge of their duty in the work of the ministery, *John* 17.14. & 15.22. Lord, saith the preacher, I gave them thy word to whom thou didst send me: and though some did receive it, yet others did refuse it, and hated those who did receive it. Thy word I taught without mixture and deceit, pressing the Authority of thy sacred majesty.

3. By complaining of the obstinacy of those who hear the word. *Lord, who hath believed our report?* Isa.53. 1. Lord, how few are there that regard what we speak? They look upon thy word as our report, as though it had no other Author than our selves, and so give no heed or credit to what we say. They consider not that thou speakest when we speak, and so they think they are not bound to believe us.

4. By reporting the ill usage they meet withall from the opposers of the Gospel. They shew their Lord what they suffer for his names sake. The Apostles returning from their Adversaries to God, said, *And now Lord, behold their threatnings*, Act. 4. 29. Lord, saith the preacher, behold how many speak against us, because we speak for thee,

how many threaten us, because we denounce thy threatnings against them for their sins. We may be sure that God hearkens to such grievances.

5. By appealling to God as the supream power, whose name hath the greatest wrong by the opposers of the Gospel, *Act.*4.24,25. They shew unto their Lord, that the opposition of enemies is not so much against them [poor servants] as against himself, and Son and heir Christ Jesus. In outward appearance it is against us, but of a truth it is against thy holy child Jesus.

CHAP. V.

NOw the time when the messengers of the Gospel do make this report, is

1. In this life, when they address themselves to the throne of grace by prayer, *Act.* 4. 23,24,31. As they speak from the Lord, so they have daily occasion to speak to the Lord: and they must tell him of their hearers manners, as well as tell them of his mind, yet so as in this life while there is hope, to beg pardon in their behalf, *Luke* 23. 34. Those many souls brought in at St. *Peters* Sermon, *Act.*2. Some attribute as a gracious return to the fore-mentioned prayer of our

our Saviour: and ſome make St. *Pauls* converſion as an anſwer to St. *Stephens* prayer, *lay not this ſin to their charge.*

2. In the life to come, when they appear to give up their account at God's tribunal: then they ſhall lay all open, and ſpeak plainly againſt all that opoſed the truth. Like as the the Prophets ſometimes prophetically deſired abſolutely, that the curſe of God might fall upon ſuch enemies of theirs, *Jer.* 18. 20, 23. which kind of imprecations, though God's meſſengers muſt not now follow, yet ſurely hereafter they will. Lord, remember that heretofore I ſtood before thee to interceed for this people, that they might be bleſt, but now I ſtand before thee to accuſe them, that they may be curſt.

The reaſons why God's meſſengers muſt do thus, are theſe.

1. Becauſe God is their Lord in a peculiar ſenſe, according to the phraſe in our Text, unto whom they ſtand reſponſible for all that they have done in the work of the miniſtry.

2. Becauſe God made them witneſſes, *Act.* 26. 16. and they muſt not be falſe witneſſes. Surely as their perſons, ſo their labours and their lives, and their ſufferings, will

will all come in as witneſſes at the great day.

3. Becauſe God hath made them ſtewards, 1 *Cor.*4.1. and ſo they muſt give a true account. I have obſerved in the Courts of Judicature here below at our Aſſizes, when thoſe that are called do make default, the officer is called who ſummoned them, an Oath adminiſtred to the Baily of ſuch an hundred, and then this is propounded to him, By virtue of the Oath which you have taken, did you warn ſuch a man? Yes, ſaith he, then is he liable to the cenſure of the Court. Thus, methinks, 'twill be at the Great Aſſizes, ſpeak you Miniſters of ſuch a City, of ſuch a Town, of ſuch a Village, did you not warn ſuch a people? did you not leave ſuch a ſummons with them? did you not preach ſuch a Doctrine among them? make many a prayer for them? yea Lord! but they refuſed to bear thy Sons yoke; they would not reform their lives according to thy Laws. This will be dreadful againſt all the refuſers of the Goſpel.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. HEre ye may see, why ministers are so much despised by many, it is because their employment is to discover the faults of others, and that displeaseth those that are faulty, *Act.* 19. 28. not only the profane, but the erroneous too, do fall out with sound and faithful teachers. When the truth is spoken against errours, it causeth many enemies, *Gal.* 4. 16. The preachers office displeaseth those that allow themselves in any sin, and so consequentially it cannot be but their persons are opposed.

Omnis prædicator est vir rixarum & judicii, ac cogitur ex officio reprehendere quicquid vitiosum est, non habita ratione, vel personæ, vel officii in auditoribus. Luther.

Again, it is but a folly, for any to think to fare the better for their acquaintance with the messengers of the Gospel, when they refuse the message of the Gospel, for they must relate things as they are. *'Tis required in stewards, that a man be found faithful*, 1 Cor. 4. 2. Though the hearer should be Wife, Brother, or Sister to the preacher, and should live contrary to the Doctrine of holiness which he preacheth, yet none of them shall be

be advantaged by their relation to him.

Use 2. Yet 'tis not the messenger of the Gospel, but the refusal of the Gospel-message that condemneth men: it is mens own sin that casteth them. Witnesses of old were wont to put their hand upon the head of the offendor, and say, it is thine own wickedness that condemneth thee, and not we. The most obstinate man, the Heretick is condemned of himself, *Tit.* 3.14. holding such an erroneous opinion, he doth vertually condemn himself, declaring that he is fallen from the truth, and is an opposer of the same.

Malitia tua te ad mortem adduxit, non nos. Lyran.

Now though God's messengers make a report to God, yet it is not to inform him, as though he did not know those things without that report: God is greater than our reports, yea than our hearts, and knows all things, 1 *John* 3.20. all things are naked and open in his sight, *Heb.* 4.12.

Use 3. Then let this Doctrine be a watchword to you that are our hearers: Ministers must do your errand. Must Ministers shew to the Lord what you do; oh then take heed what ye do! Venture not upon any known sin upon any pretence, *Prov.* 1.10. Think with your self, would you do such a thing, if the pas-

passages of it should be told to the whole Town: oh then why will ye venture upon such sinful practices, which must be reported unto God before all the world at the last day? do not continue in any known sin; be not as the men of this world, who lie in wickedness, 1 *John* 5.19. Ye that will go on in the ways of your own heart, know ye, that for all these things God will bring you to judgment, *Eccl.* 11.9.

If it be thus, then consider, what answer will ye now give to the messenger of the Gospel to be returned in your behalf.

1. Let it not be *a refractory answer*, like that of the *Jews* to *Jeremiah*, *We will not walk therein*, Jer. 6.16. oh let not your hearts rise, and swell against the holy word of God.

2. Let it not be *a delatory answer*, like that of *Felix* to *Paul*, I will call for thee, when I have a convenient season, *Act.* 24. 25. A meer put-off to spin out time.

3. Let it not be *a cursory answer*, like that of *Israel* to *Joshua*, *All that thou commandest, we will do*, Josh. 1.16. suddenly spoken, without the consideration of what was to be done, or with what strength they would do it, as appears by their frequent revolting afterwards. Some people are ready to answer as fast as a Minister can ask them, will you forsake the

Devil

Devil and all his works, the pomp and vanity of the world? oh yes, we will do any thing; but alas! they little consider what they say, as appeareth by their soon turning aside from the paths of holiness.

4. Let it not be *a nugatory answer* with those guests in our parable, who preferred the trifles of this world before the eternal good things of the Gospel. But let it be an humble, holy answer, like that of the Psalmist, *Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes*, in answer to that, *Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently*, Psal. 119.4,5.

SERM-

SERM. XII.

Luke 14. 21.

—*Then the Master of the house being angry*, &c.]

CHAP. I.

THese words begin the fourth general part of the parable, the Result upon the former; the resolution of him who made the feast, upon the Contempt offered by some, to fill up his table with other guests. *Then.*] When the report was returned of the excuses made by those who refused the Gospel-provision. *The master of the house,*] or the Master of the family: He of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 3. 14, 15. or the Master of that house, which is the Church of the living God, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. *Being angry,*] the Greek word signifies the inflammation

Δεσπότης ἀ Δέω, noting one that ruleth over things, as if he had them tyed in bands.

ὀργὴ ἀπὸ τὸ ὀρέγεσθαι, appetere, sc. vindictam.

mation of the mind, with a purpose of revenge, proper to man, and applyed to God by a phrase spoken after the manner of men. Well might he be angry, considering the carriage of those fore-mentioned guests, which so affronted him. Hence observe,

Observ. That God is angry with those that refuse the Gospel-provision, *Matth.* 22. 7.

When God is said to be angry, we are not to think he is angry as a man, with the affection or passion, much less with the perturbation of anger; but he is said to be angry, when he acts like a man in his anger, when he puts forth such effects for such causes of anger. Those effects of anger which God put's forth, are 1. Threatning revenge. A man that is angry crys out, I shall be even with you, I shall pay you in your own Coin: so saith God, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay*, Rom. 12. 19. I will meet with such a one, I will vex them in my sore displeasure. 2. Withdrawing acts of friendship. An angry man withdraws his foot from his neighbours house, he turns away his eye, or hides his face from his neighbours misery. The anger of God is called the hiding of his face, *Psal.* 44. 24. at which time he forgat their

Deo ira tribuitur, cum ostendit factis, aliquid sibi displicere, maximè cum pœnam infligit. Rivet.

their affliction and oppression, and did not go forth with their armies, *ver.*9. he acted as if he cared not what became of them. 3. Inflicting acts of hostility. An angry man watcheth to do another a discourtesie, so doth God being angry, *Dan.* 9.14. he watcheth to bring evil upon a people: his providence is intent to bring it in the fittest time.

CHAP. II.

THe fundamental and essential cause of anger, is contempt, which may be branched out into these subordinate causes, as

Despectus tibi sum, nec quis sim quæris Alexi, &c. Virg. Ænead. 1.

1. The slighting of benefits. A man is angry, when his favours are not regarded. Thus God's anger was kindled, when the *Israelites* said, there is nothing beside this Manna, *Numb.* 11.6.

2. The disparaging of the name. A man is angry, when his Credit is struck at: so is God, when his name is polluted, and profaned.

3. The frustrating of expectations makes a man angry. So God was angry with his Vineyard,

עִכְּבוּם שֹׁדֵק
בַּאֲשִׁים

 because,

because, when he looked for Grapes, it brought forth wild grapes, *Isa.* 5.

That God is angry with those that refuse Gospel-mercy, appeareth by his executing all manner of judgments upon them, as

1. *External* judgments. God sent the *Romans* to destroy the *Jews* for their contempt of the Gospel, *Matth.* 22. 7. first the white horse went out, Christ riding triumphantly in the Chariot of his ordinances, *Rev.* 6. 2. but for the worlds opposing it, there followed the red, and black, and pale horses, *ver.* 4, 5, 8. sword, famine, death.

2. *Internal* judgments. For not receiving the love of Gospel-truth, God gives up men to a strong delusion to believe a lye, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. and as inwardly there is the strength of a deluded mind, so there is the sting of a guilty conscience, *Gen.* 4. 13. which makes a man a terrour to himself.

3. *Eternal* judgment. *That they all might be damned, who believed not the truth,* 2 Thes. 1. 12. concerning such, God hath sworn, that they shall not enter into his rest, *Heb.* 3. 18.

The

The reasons why God is angry with such as refuse Gospel-mercy, are these.

1. Because they look upon the message as a meer trifle, they make light of it, *Mat.* 22. 5. though it be of the greatest concernment in the world.

2. They look upon the messengers, as though they were malefactors, rather than Ministers of God, and Embassadours of the Gospel, and intreat them spitefully, *Matth.* 22. 6. when people come to such barbarous carriage, there is no remedy against destruction, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. Abuse of Embassadours is a just cause to make war.

3. They look upon the Master of the house, even God himself, as a Lyar. He that believeth not maketh him a Lyar, 1 *John* 5. 10. To give God the lye, and stand to it, must needs provoke him to give men their portion with the Devil and his Angels.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. IF the refusal of the Gospel make God angry, then surely God is pleased with them who accept of Gospel-mercy. First, he takes delight in his Son, as mediator between God and man, *Matth.* 3. 17. then he takes

delight in men as they close with his Son: he hath accepted us, ἐχαρίτωσεν, or ingratiated us in the beloved, *Eph.*1.6.

Use 2. Though God here be said to be angry, yet must we not think God to be like to our selves, as though he were subject to, or capable of passions as we are. Fury is not in him, *Isa.* 27. 4. God is without parts and passions, he is not carryed by affections. They are neither materially, nor formally in God, whose essence is unmixt, and immutable: In man anger is a mixt affection, made up of these two ingredients, *Sorrow*, and *Revenge*. Man is disturbed when angry. *Scylla* in an excess of fury vomited up bloud, and dyed: but God is not disturbed in his anger. Anger in God is a work contrary to his disposition of himself, who inclineth rather to mercy. If men would lay down their sins, God would lay down his anger for ever, *Jer.*3.12.

Use 3. Take heed of an evil heart of unbelief, for this makes God so angry, as to swear in his wrath, *Heb.*3.11,12. *Will ye provoke the Lord to jealousie? are ye stronger than he?* 1 *Cor* 10.22. Gods anger is compared in Scripture to a whirlwind, *Prov.* 1. 27. which comes suddenly, and irresistibly, and with a terrible noise, renting and tearing where it cometh. It is compared to an over-flowing floud,

Isa.

Isa. 28. 2. which no banks, nor bounds can keep in. It is likened to a devouring fire: hence is that phrase of his anger being kindled, and waxing hot, *Isa.* 5. 24,25. and sinners are compared to dry wood. If these things be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? it is also compared to the raging of a Bear bereaved of her whelps, and to a Lyon and Leopard. All are put together, *Hos.* 13.7,8. This anger of God put the fallen Angels into everlasting chains, *Jude* ver. 6. It drove man out of Paradise, turning him out unto the wide world as it were to shift for himself. Spoiling him of all his ornaments and endowments. It drowned the old world, and turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* into ashes. It ruined the *Jews* both as a Church and a common-wealth. Let all that have felt the anger of God, speak whether it be not an intollerable burden. Oh kiss the son, lest he be angry, *Psal.* 2.12. both with a kiss of faith, and of love and affection to him: take his yoke, submit to his government. If Christ be angry with you, you perish in the way. Those that refuse Gospel-light, shall be cast into outer-darkness, *Matth.* 8. 12. But blessed are they that trust in him. They who thus come to him, shall be welcome: they shall have the smiles of his face, the kisses of

his lips, the embraces of his armes to all eternity.

CHAP. IV.

Said to his servant, &c.]

THis phrase suits well with that in *v.* 17. where *the servant* was sent to say to them that were bidden. There the servant spoke to the Guests, here the Lord speaks to his servant: intimating to us, that those who came in the name of the Lord, must speak in the words of the Lord, delivering the Gospel-errand in the way and manner to others, as God delivers it to them. Hence observe,

Observ. God speakes unto his servants, the messengers of the Gospel, that which they must speak to others, *Luke* 1.70. The Revelation of Divine truth in divers manners heretofore, was all from God, first speaking to his Prophets, and then to his people. God spake of old in divers manners, *Heb.* 1.1. as

Sect. 1.

1. By dreams. Thus God revealed to *Jacob* the mystery of Christ as mediator in the representation of a Ladder, reaching from earth to heaven, *Gen.* 28. 12. This was in the night, being retired from worldly business, that God re-

Antiquâ fingebant somnium deum alitem et volatilem.

revealed his mind by dreams. These Divine dreams were sent upon weighty occasions, and they left a certain perswasion, and inward sense of God's presence upon the soul, saith *Musculus*.

2. In a most familiar manner: Thus God spake to *Moses* face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend, *Exod.* 33. 11. A special priviledge that *Moses* had above the rest of the Prophets. God speaking to him, not by the mediation of an Angel, as to others, nor yet by any form or similitude, nor yet with terrour and amazement as to others, but he spake with God familiarly.

3. By *Urim* and *Thummim*: which words signifie *light* and *perfection*, Exod. 28. 30. They seem to be two precious stones given by the Lord himself to be set in the breast-plate of the High Priest. The manner how God revealed himself by *Urim* and *Thummim* is not set down in Scripture. It is conceived to be as an holy sign, that the Lord was to inspire the High Priest with an answer as *Sampson*'s hair was not his strength, but the sign of it.

Josephus saith, they shined, if *Israel* marched forward: they shined not, if they were to stay.

4. By Visions. Thus God revealed the knowledge of Christ as a mighty one, *Psal.*

89. 19. This was in the day, as dreams in the night. In these visions there was. 1. The representing of spiritual things by sensible forms. Hence God is said to multiply visions, and to use similitudes by the ministery of his Prophets, *Hos.* 12. 10. A plain discovery of deep mysteries. Thus the King of *Babylons* coming against *Jerusalem* was represented by a great Eagle, *Ezek.* 17. 3, 12. a fit Emblem, as appears by the collation which the Prophet makes. As these predictions were called visions, so the Prophets were called *Seers*, and they were Hieroglyphical Teachers, giving instructions by Emblems. 2. There was also the irradiation, or shining light on the minds of the Prophets, whereby there was the certain knowledge of those divine truths imparted to them. *Ezekiel* saith, the heavens were opened, and he saw the visions of God. The opening of the heaven, and the opening of the understanding do make an undeniable demonstration of the point, *Ezek.* 1. 1. There was also. 3. The impulse of the spirit, whereby they were strongly carryed to make known that to others, which God made known to them. Hence the word of the Lord, and the Hand of the Lord, are joyned together, *Ezek.* 1. 3. The word of the Lord came expressly to him with that evidence and clear-

clearness, that he could not withstand it: and the hand of the Lord was upon him. The spirit of the Lord took hold of him, and made him carry that word unto the people.

5. By inspiration, infallibly to set down in writing the mind of God. Thus in old time holy men spake, as they were moved, or φερόμενοι, forcibly moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 *Pet.* 1.21. carryed out of themselves, not speaking their own mind, but the mind of God. In speaking of which, the Pen-men of Scripture often spake against themselves; they minded not their own personal credit or discredit as other writers do.

Sect. 2.

The Revelation of divine truth to us in these last days is spoken from God by his son, *Heb.* 1.2. That eminently faithful servant of God, *Isa.* 53. 11. here we must consider. 1. Christ spake those words to others, which his father spake to him, *John* 17.8. he communicated of his father's secrets. 2. The Apostles spake those words which Christ spake to them, 1 *John* 1.3 *Paul* received all that he delivered, 1 *Cor.* 11.23. and he delivered all that he received, *Act.* 20.27. he declared the whole counsel of God. Now 3. Ministers since are to speak that which is spoken in the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apostles,

and

and no other Doctrine upon the pain of a curse, *Gal.*1.8.

The reasons why it is thus, are

1. That the word which is spoken, may appear to be the word of God, and not of men, 2 *Thes.*2.13. though coming by men, yet not coming from men.

2. That those that speak the word may appear to be men of God, and sufficiently furnisht for that great work they take upon them, 2 *Tim.* 3.16, 17. God is their Teacher; they are servants of God for the good of men.

3. That those who obey the word that is spoken, may appear to be men fearing God, trembling at his word, *Isa.*50.10.

4. That those who disobey the word which is spoken, may appear to be contemners of God, how shall men escape, that neglect so great salvation, concerning the delivery whereof there is such evident demonstration, *Heb.* 2. 2, 3, 4.

CHAP. V.

Use 1. THis shews us, that the preaching of the word is to be delivered as the Oracles of God, 1 *Pet.*4.11. not rashly, and waver-

waveringly, but reverently, and resolvedly. The Prophets of old durst not give out any thing to the Church, but what God first gave out to them, *Hab.*2.1. So what is now spoken, must be fetched from the holy Scriptures. Away then with their practice, who thrust the decrees of men upon people for the ordinances of God.

Then must not the preachers of the word seek to please men, for if they should, they should not be the servants of God, *Gal.*1.10. every servant must study to please his own master: Ministers must not study to gratifie the humours of their hearers: nor must they claw the itching ears of humorous ones. Those that do so, are not God's builders, but the Devil's dirt-daubers.

Use 2. Yet this doth not make, but that preachers may consult with humane Authors. *Paul* cites the saying of an Heathen Poet, *Tit.*1.12. Though humane Learning be not so requisite for the delivery of the plain truths of the Gospel, yet it is very material for the confuting the subtil cavils of the opposers of the Gospel. Yea preachers may receive light from men like themselves; not only from the Scriptures, but from judicious expositors. Though no writings may be received in a co-ordination with the holy Scriptures, yet they

may

may in a subordination to them. Though the Scripture explain it self, yet 'tis but a Normal expositor, and we have need of personal expositors too, *Act.* 8. 31. The Mathematicks are not learned without a Teacher, so it is with many Scriptures which are hard to be understood.

Use 3. Doth God speak to his messengers what they speak, then let our behaviour be answerable to the belief of such truth.

1. In reference to the Scriptures where God speaks, let us look upon them as the inspiration of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. Oh what majesty and harmony, what verity and purity is in them! Read the Scriptures, and meditate therin, as the word of God, *Psal.* 1. 3. They are as a Letter sent from Christ to a particular person, *Rev.* 2. 1. let them much affect thee in the reading these lines. They are as good news out of a far Country, oh welcome it. They are as a Statute-book containing those wholsome Laws according to which we are to order our lives: it concerns us to be well skilled in them.

2. In reference to Christ, that messenger of the Covenant, by whom God doth principally speak unto men: let us hear him, because God sends to us by him, and hath in a special manner authorized him to speak unto us

us, *Matth.* 17. 5. yield faith and obedience to what he speaks, *hear and live*, Isa. 55. 3.

3. In reference to Ministers: Account of them as the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, 1 *Cor.* 4. 1. wait on the ministry of the word, as upon God himself, *Prov.* 8. 34. do not expect that God should teach you without the means, if ye neglect the means he hath set up among you. Frequent the publick ministry: be attentive hearers. It is dangerous to fall asleep with a Candle burning by your side, some have been so burnt in their beds: but it is more dangerous to sleep, while the Candle of the word is burning so near you: and do not wander in your thoughts, that is, to sleep with your eyes open. Be also retentive hearers: food received, if it stay not with us, doth us no good. The honest and good heart having heard the word, keeps it, *Luke* 8. 15. If you have not strength of memory to keep the words of a Sermon, see that ye have an honest heart to keep the substance of a Sermon. I have heard of a woman, having (methinks) such an heart, who coming from a Sermon, one askt her, what she remembred, she answered, that at present she could not recal much, but she heard that which should make her to reform some things as soon as she came home.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Go out quickly into the Streets, and Lanes of the City.]

IN these words we have the commission of the Gospel-messenger renewed. The chief ones among the *Jews* proved Recusant Guests, as hath been shewn by their several excuses given in. Now therefore the invitation is sent to the body of that people, and afterwards to the *Gentiles*, ver. 23. though some would have the *Gentiles* meant in this verse. In the words read there is the manner how, and the place where this great errand of the Gospel is to be delivered: For the first, the manner is with expedition, *Go out quickly.*] For the Greek word translated [*Go out.*] Criticks observe its use, 1. In a military expedition. There is indeed a *Militia* in the ministry, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. the work of it is to wage war against mens lusts. 2. For going out by authoritative commission, as *Mark* 1. 38. *Act.* 1. 21. Thus ministers are to go out, go when they

Ἐξέρχομαι propriè significat exire in expeditionem, & ad pugnam contra hostes. Novar.

De missione ad officium usurpatur.

they are sent: as we heard on *ver.* 17. The word we are now to fasten upon, is that word [*Quickly*,] it is swift, upon the wing. Here note,

Observ. God would have a quick, or speedy dispatch of the Gospel-message, *Mat.* 10. 7, 10. This appeareth,

1. In the *Promise*: God himself did make a quick discovery of the Gospel-mystery. The promise of the second *Adam* came into the world soon after the sin of the first *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. As man continued not long in his state of innocency, so neither did he continue long in his state of Apostacy, without the hope of recovery. As soon as ever man drank in the deadly poison of sin, God provided the bloud of Christ as an Antidote for the same.

2. In *the Type.* The children of *Israels* deliverance out of *Egyptian* bondage, was a type of our deliverance from wrath to come. And the Passeover was a sign of, that deliverance which they were to eat in haste, *Exod.* 12. 11. because they were sent out of the Land of *Egypt* in haste, *ver.* 33. *Solomon* in his Royalty was a type of Christ in the excellency of the Gospel. The Psalmist therefore speaking of him, saith, *His tongue was the Pen of a ready writer*, Psal. 45. 2. dexterously setting forth Christ in all his glory.

3. In

3. In *the Propheſie* : *Iſaiah* ſpeaking of Chriſt's throne, ſaith, there ſhall be *the haſting of righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 16. 5. diſpatching buſineſs without needleſs delays.

4. In *the performance* in the days of the Goſpel. There was a going forth quickly within a few days after Chriſt's Aſcenſion, *Act.* 2. This is *Salmeron*'s gloſs upon the words of our Text. Thus then, in the Primitive times the Apoſtles did go out quickly. St. *John* ſets it out by the Hieroglyphick of a white horſe, and his Rider going forth conquering and to conquer, *Rev.* 6. 2. The Emblem of thoſe Apoſtolical preachers might well be a white horſe : white for their purity of Doctrine, Diſcipline, and Converſation. Horſes for their ſwift preaching of the Goſpel. An horſe by the Heathens was dedicated to the Sun becauſe of its ſwiftneſs. *Euſebius* ſpeaking of the ſpreading of the Goſpel by thoſe Primitive preachers, ſaith, that it ran through the world like a Sun-beam. And St. *Paul* exhorts the *Theſſalonians* to pray, that the word might have ſuch a free courſe, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 1.

Ἀθεόων ὅτα τὴν κλίνοντα. Euſeb. Hiſt. l. 1. c. 22.

So in the reforming times in *Luthers* days : How many godly and learned men did go out quickly, and ſpread the Goſpel far and near?

near? *Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Zanchy, Peter Martyr, Bucer, Musculus, Oecolampadius, Latimer, Cranmer, Ridley, &c.* on this side, and on that side the Seas, there were very many, *viz.* Those Angels which came flying with the everlasting Gospel in the midst of heaven, *Rev.* 14.6. So the Learned interpret that place. The Gospel had a swift passage by diligent preaching, by Printing good Books, by Translating the holy Scriptures into vulgar Tongues, by Catechizing youth, by publick Disputations, by recording the Martyrs: such a thing (saith one) as the former age had even despaired of, the present age admireth, and the future shall stand amazed at. Thus he speaks of the Reformation in *England*.

Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ reformationem desperasset ætas præterita, admiratur præsens, obstupescet futura. Scultet. annal.

CHAP. VII.

This work is brought to pass.

1. BY the Ascension of Christ, who went up in the Chariot of a cloud, *Act.* 1.9. which moves swiftly: and upon his Ascension the spirit came down in the form of fire, *Act.* 2.3. which is quick of motion.

2. By the operation of the spirit. 1. Giving utterance to them that spake: for those Primitive preachers spake as the spirit gave them utterance, *Act.* 2. 4. uttering divine Apothegms, the Oracles of God. 2. Making entrance into them that heard. The word in their mouths (called the sword of the spirit) was sharp and penetrating. It is said, the Angels went whither the spirit was to go, *Ezek.* 1. 12. so do the Angels of Churches, the Ministers of the Gospel.

The reasons why it is thus are these,

1. Because things of the greatest worth (and such the Gospel-message is) are to be speedily dispatcht. If a pardon be to be sent to one that is ready to be executed, he that carrys it must make haste. Letters of great importance have this writ upon their backside post-haste.

2. Because both those that preach, and those that hear the Gospel too, are but creatures, *Mark* 16. 15. therefore preachers are to make as much hast as they can in delivering the Gospel-message to their hearers, who have but a little while to be hearing.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Use 1. SEe here how liberal God is, how speedy in shewing mercy, which doth very much set it off: he comes apace towards his people, *Psal.*104.3,4. clouds and Chariot, wings and wind, spirits and fire, all speaks speed; every word shews swift motion.

See here also how unbeseeming sloth and lazinesse is in the Ministers of the Gospel. A lazy labourer; an idle Minister is as absurd as a blind eye. God cannot bear with such. *Oh thou wicked and slothful servant!* Matth.25. 26. Such a loyterer is an unfaithful Steward in God's house, who wraps up his talent in idlenesse, and burys it in the earth, where perhaps he is playing the worldling all his time.

Use 2. Though the messengers of the Gospel are to go quickly when they are sent; yet they are not to run before they are sent. We read of a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, *Matth.* 13.52. it is not for every one who can speak an hour to adventure upon the work of teaching.

Again, though Ministers sent are to go quickly, yet they must not in their speaking

be too quick for their hearers: they should make no more haste than good speed. Old Mr. *Dod* observes it as a general fault among Ministers, to shoot over their hearers. Ministers should explain divine truths leisurably, that the weakest capacity may understand the same.

Use 3. Must ministers go quickly to you, then answer this Doctrine with the quickness of your motion! be swift to hear: Make use of all opportunities where ye may hear safely for the good of your souls. Be you as quick in closing with the Gospel, as God would have his messengers quick in disclosing it. Make your peace with God speedily, *Matth.* 5. 25. The only way for this is through Christ, that one mediatour between God and man, 1 *Tim.* 2. 5. If you would not hazard the loss of all by continuance in sin, make haste to compound through faith in Christ. Be sure ye do not put off Gospel-advice a day longer, *Heb.* 3. 7. Christ bid *Zacheus*, make haste, and come down, and accordingly he did, and received him joyfully, *Luke* 19. 5, 6. Be restless in your spirits till you find Christ, who is the rest of your souls. Enquire diligently, whether you are in the way to heaven, then make haste in that way, go on with speed. The life of Christianity is as a race, therefore so run

run that ye may obtain, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. Sin is like a sore, the longer you let it alone, the more it festers and ranckles, and the worse it is to heal. The Scripture saith, *To day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*, Heb. 3. 13. sin encroacheth upon the soul by degrees, *James* 1. 14, 15. let young men remember God in their youth: the sooner any receive the Gospel-message, they are in a capacity to do God the more service. Do not put off the doing, or receiving good till old age. Yet let not this discourage old people from minding good: Better late than never. If you come in (though at the eleventh hour) you shall have your reward, *Matth.* 20. 9. *Abraham* was old when God called him. It was late ere the Thief on the cross was converted, he had a quick passage from the Cross to heaven.

CHAP. IX.

Into the streets and lanes of the City.]

THese words do seem in a special manner to refer to the preaching of the Gospel unto the body of the Jewish people after the refusal of it by the great ones among them: according to that commission

πλατεῖα a πλατύς. *Latini quoq; utuntur vocabulo platea pro*

via urbis latiore. Plaut. & Terent.

where the charge is to go to the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, Matth. 10. 6. the accomplishment of which appears in that sacred History of the Acts of the Apostles. *Into the streets and lanes,*] the two Greek words signifie places of resort, where there are continually multitudes of people. This phrase [*the streets of the City*] may bear the same sense, as judicious Mr. *Mede* takes that in *Rev.* 11. 8. who understands it for the Territories belonging to the Dominion of that City. Here then it must be taken for the whole Country of *Judea* among whom God would have the Gospel publish'd. And then *in the high ways and hedges,*] among the sinners and out-casts of the *Gentiles.* Thus *Salmer.* glosseth upon our Text, understanding these words of the Jewish commonalty, who have their houses together in streets and lanes, as the Nobility have theirs alone. *Streets* and *lanes* denote the multitude of persons to whom, and the publickness of place where the Gospel is preached.

Ρύμη a Ρύω, urbis locus in quem omnes certatim confluunt.

Territorium universum urbis ditioni subjectum designans. Med. in Apoc. 11.

Obser.

Observ. God would have the Gospel preached openly, where it may be free for all to hear it, *Prov.* 8.2,3. and Chap. 1.20.

1. In streets there are rows of houses together: Hence we have the name [*Parish*] from the scituation of houses one by another, the joyning of several houses together. Thus then, the going into Streets and Lanes, is the preaching of the gospel in Cities, Towns, Villages, Parishes, where people dwell together. Thus the Apostles went from City to City preaching the gospel, *Act.* 14.21. and preaching Elders were ordained in every City, *Tit.* 1.5. God in mercy providing for the conveniencies of people in sending the Gospel to their very doors; it is but for them to step out, and they may gather up this heavenly Manna.

Parish, a Παροικία

2. Streets and lanes are places of concourse, where there is continual going and coming: they are thorow-fares, passages in which some are daily and hourly passing by, *Prov.* 7.8. Thus then, the going into streets and lanes is the preaching of the Gospel unto men, who are a company of Travellers upon earth, exhorting them as strangers and pilgrims to abstain from sin, 1 *Pet.* 2.11. whiles they are going to and fro God would have

them hear that which may do them good for ever.

3. Streets and lanes are places of paſtime: Boys and Girls are playing in the ſtreets, *Zech.* 8. 5. Thus then the going into ſtreets and lanes is the preaching of the Goſpel unto the children of men, to take them off from earthly vanities, and to perſwade them unto heavenly excellencies, *Act.* 14. 13, 15. *Eccl.* 11. 9, 10.

4. Streets and lanes are places of merchandiſe: your ſhops and markets are in your ſtreets. Thus then, the going into ſtreets and lanes, is the preaching the Goſpel to ſupply mens neceſſities for the good of their ſouls, that they may have food and raiment for their ſouls. The preaching of the Goſpel is the holding forth ſpiritual wares, *Iſa.* 55. 1. where men by believing may make ſpiritual mercies as ſurely theirs, as any thing is theirs which they have bought. Every Lord's day is a market-day for our ſouls.

5. Streets and lanes are places for the proclaiming of Acts and Edicts: Proclamations are read, and poſted up in the ſtreets: in alluſion to which, *Jeremiah* is bid to proclaim the word of the Lord in the ſtreets of *Jeruſalem*, Jer. 11. 6. Thus then the going into ſtreets and lanes is the preaching the Goſpel by an office-

office-ministry, sent of God to proclaim the glad tidings of the Gospel. *Wisdom stands in the tops of the high places, and cryeth in the Gates,* Prov. 8. 2, 3. as the Herauld, and Cryer standeth above the rest, that he may be heard.

CHAP. X.

The reasons why God will have the Gospel preached openly, are

1. TO shew the soveraign use of the Gospel: *The leaves of this tree of life are for the healing of the Nations:* Rev. 22. 2. it is for redemption out of every kindred, and Tongue, and people, and nation, *Rev.* 5. 9.

2. To shew the honourable employment of the work of the preaching of the Gospel: it is a work none need be ashamed of, *Rom.* 1. 16. God's messengers appear openly in the streets; they are not ashamed to hold up their wares against the Sun. Their preaching in the light, and upon the house tops, *Matth.* 10. 27. sheweth, that preaching is justifiable before all the world.

3. To shew the good will of God, who would have all come to the knowledge of the truth, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. he is no respecter of persons, but in every place those that fear him are accepted with him, *Act.* 10. 34, 25. he sends the

the gospel-invitation into the streets and lanes without prefering one house before another.

4. To shew the inexcusableness of men in refusing the gospel-offer. They cannot plead they never heard of it. Not only the dust of the street, but the stones, and houses of the street will rise up in judgment against those who refuse the gospel preached.

CHAP. XI.

Use 1. THis informs us, that a publick ministry is a great mercy. The ministry of the gospel by publick persons, such as are authorized thereunto; and in publick places, where any have free leave to attend upon means of grace: which the Prophet mentions as a special favour, when our Teachers are not removed into corners, but our eyes see our Teachers, *Isa.* 30. 20. teaching in our view, not driven to hide themselves. This also informs us of several sorts who are blame-worthy in opposing this truth, as 1. Such as pretend themselves to be gospel-messengers, and decline the publick dispensation thereof, who instead of going into streets and lanes to convert men to, and confirm men in the faith, creep into houses to sub-

subvert the faith of some, leading captive silly women, 2 *Tim.* 3. 6.—2. Such as wilfully sit within their doors, when the gospel is preached in their streets, that come not forth to hear the voice of wisdom that cries in their streets, *Matth.* 12. 42.—3. Such as will not suffer the messengers of the gospel to preach openly, or to teach in their streets, contradicting or disturbing the publick preachers, like those in *Act.* 13. 45. or suspending and banishing them, when it is in their power.

Use 2. Yet this doth not make, but that upon occasion the gospel may be lawfully preached in private houses. *Paul* taught publickly, and likewise from house to house, *Act.* 20. 20. in every place Religious service is accepted, if it be done in a right manner (not but that the conveniency of publick houses to meet in, is a great mercy, as was hinted before) let none then be prejudiced with the circumstance of place, so as to be hindered of the substance of the gospel: yet there is a vast difference between this going into houses to build up one another in our most holy faith, and that creeping into houses as it were by stealth, to subvert the faith of others. The one is like the visit of a friend; the other like the sly entrance of a Thief.

Use

Use 3. Hear then, and give ear, you that inhabit the ſtreets and lanes, and villages about this Town, *Jer.* 11. 6. God ſent his Seers to take notice what they did in *Jeruſalem* according to their ſtreets, *ver.* 13. your Town is divided into ſeveral ſtreets, and lanes. Take therefore the word of God, as thoughyou hadaparticular meſſage ſent into every ſtreet and lane this dayfrom heaven. God knoweth *Maidſtone*, as well as he did *Jeruſalem*: ye therefore, that inhabit the ſtreets of this Town, the High-ſtreet, the South-ſide, and the North-ſide of it, Week-ſtreet, Stone-ſtreet, *&c.* ye that inhabit the ſeveral lanes of this Town, Eaſt-lane, Bullock-lane, *&c.* look into your hearts and ways.

Moreover, ye that are come out of your doors into the ſtreets, meeting the meſſage of God thus openly, conſider wherefore ye are come: as Chriſt ſaid to the multitudes that went to hear *John Baptiſt*, *What went ye out for to ſee?* Mat. 11. 7. the reaſons why we hear any preacher ſhould be well examined: as to hear him becauſe he is an officer in that work, *John* was a Prophet, and more than a Prophet. *John* was not a reed ſhaken by the wind. Be ye ſure to ſeek Chriſt in the ſtreets, in the publick ordinances, *Cant.* 3. 2, 3. Ask the watchmen that go about the City. The Prieſts

Priests lips of old were to preserve knowledge. Receive those messengers of God into your houses, who preach in your streets, *Mat.*10.12,13. Give countenance and maintenance to their persons, give audience to their Doctrine: welcome those that come in the name of Christ, and give them high esteem for their work-sake. *Receive us*, saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.*7.2. make room for us in your houses and hearts, let their peace come upon you; if you beat it back, it will return to them, *Mat.* 10.13.

Consider ye, it is not the presence of ministers in your streets will serve you in any stead, unless you make good use of them. There be those will make this their plea before Christ at the great day, *Thou hast taught in our streets*, Luke 13.26. If ye make no good use of the messengers of the Gospel in your streets, whom God sends in mercy, you may have other kind of guests in your streets, whom God sends in judgment. The sword may be in your streets, Chariots raging in your streets, *Nah.* 2. 4. the wounded in the streets, *Lam.*2.12. carkases torn in the streets, *Isa.*5. 25. pestilence may be in your streets, *Ezek.*28.23. famine may be in your streets, *Isa.* 24.11. As these judgments have been, and are in the streets of others, God grant, that

that there may be no such complaining in our streets, *Psal.* 144. 14.

SERM. XIII.

Luke 14. 21.

—*And bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, the halt, and the blind.*

CHAP. I.

THese words contain the final cause of the former, *viz.* the end why the Master of the feast bid his servant go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the City: it was to bring in hither the poor and maimed, *&c.* where observe first, how the guests come unto this gospel-provision; it is by being brought in hither, whither they are invited. Hence I note,

Observ. God sends the messengers of the gospel out, to bring the gospel-hearers in, *Matth.* 28. 19, 20. we have heard how, and whither the messengers are sent out, now we are to enquire how they are to bring in hearers. The notation of the Greek word used in

in the Text, will give us some light here, while we consider the several acceptions of the word.

1. It signifies to bring in by way of *discovery* : as an Introduction in a Book, which serves for the help of the Reader, that he may gain the more exact knowledge of what is written. An introduction is a writing, wherein the first Elements of an Art are delivered, by which that Art or Science is the more easily learned. Thus ministers Sermons should be as introductions, to shew their hearers the way how to attain saving knowledge, *I shew unto you*, (saith St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*) *a more excellent way*, 1 Cor. 12. 31. Thus then, *Bring them in*, that is, shew them the way wherein they should walk, *Isa.* 30. 20, 21. point out Jesus Christ to them, who is the way, *John* 1. 29.

Introductio est scriptio qua prima artis alicujus elementa tradimus, & ad eam lectores velut introducimus, i. e. *ad ejus cognitionem.*

2. It signifies to bring in by way of *authority*, as a citation, or summoning into a Court of Justice: so *Demosthenes* makes use of the word. So should ministers warn and teach men, that they may present them perfect in Christ Jesus

Ἐισαγεῖν εἰς τὸ δικαστήριον. Demost.

sus at his Tribunal, *Col.*1.28. that they come to trial, and abide the trial, so should we bring men in, that they may be found to praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, 1 *Pet.*1.7.

3. It signifies to bring in by way of *conjunction*: as two streams or Rivers are brought into one: the strength of them brought into one channel, that did run into two or more. So *Homer* useth the word. So preachers should labour to bring their hearers into one way, who go in several ways. Other sheep have I saith Christ, and them also must I bring, and there shall be one fold, *John* 10. 16. This must be their work, who are shepherds under Christ.

ποταμῶν μάνοι εἰσαγωγοντες. Homer.

CHAP. II.

Now for the manner of this bringing in, it must be

1. BY convincing arguments, with plainness and fidelity, telling them of the necessity of Regeneration, faith, and repentance unto eternal life: reasoning out the case with them concerning the worth of a soul, the danger of a natural estate, the uncertainty of this world; the eternity of that which is to come,

come, the hatefulness of sin, the loveliness of grace, the incomparableness of Christ.

2. By affectionate expressions, making use, not of exasperating, but mollifying language, *Phil.* 3. 18, 19. for grace is not enforced, but distilled into the mind: exhortations should proceed from compassion. Words should be fitted to the matter, for the more ready conveyance of it into the hearts of the hearers.

3. By an exemplary life, answerable to the Doctrine which is delivered, a sober, grave, holy example. The preacher of good Doctrine, must likewise be a pattern of good works, *Tit.* 2. 7.

The truth of this point will appear, if you consider

1. The nature of men to whom the Gospel is sent, they are rational creatures, and so to be wrought upon in a rational way, by bidding them, *Consider their ways*, Hag. 1. 5. to commune with their own hearts, *Psal.* 4. 4. this is the way to illighten the understanding, to perswade the will, to stir up the affections.

2. The nature of the Gospel which is sent to men; it is *a reasonable service*, Rom. 12. 1. In

Fides est ratio christiani hominis. Luther.

those points of Christianity where there is no reason for the thing believed, yet there is very good reason for the belief of the thing, and that because of the Authority of the speaker.

3. The nature of that happiness, which is the fruit of the Gospel: this is suited to a rational creature; here is *truth* in it, which is the object of the understanding, and *Good*, which is the object of the will, *John* 17.3.

Quest. *Whether are Gospel-messengers to bring in men?*

Resp. It is said, Bring them in *hither*: in general, that is, into the house of God, 1 *Tim.* 2.13. or into the Garden of Christ. More particularly thus, 1. Into the unity of the faith, *Eph.* 4.13. to partake of the Doctrine of Christ. 2. Into the bond of peace, *Eph.* 4. 3. to partake of Christian fellowship, maintaining communion with them, who agree to walk according to the order of the Gospel.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis informs us, that men naturally are *without*, Eph. 2.12. without Christ: all out of him are without life, 1 *John* 5.12. *Without the common-wealth of Israel*, Those that belong not to Christ as the Head,

Head, belong not to his Church as the body, without the Covenants of promise. They who have not to do with the Church, have nothing to do with the priviledges thereof. Why, the Covenant (though but one) is put in the plural number, and why the promises (though many) are put in the singular number, *Beza* gives the reason: because the Covenant was often renewed, and because the promises are all but one in Christ Jesus, 2 *Cor.*1.20.—*without hope*: it is onely the heirs of promise that cast the Anchor of hope into heaven, *Heb.*6. 17, 18, 19. others may presume, but hope they cannot: he that hath no hope of an happy life hereafter, will not trouble himself about leading an holy life here. Now though men are naturally without, yet God would not have men abide without; he is so courteous and gracious, so kind and loving, as to invite men to come in. Indeed, he once drave man out, *Gen.* 3. 24. and ever since men naturally are born without; but it is as true, that he would have man come in again, that as they are born in the wide world, so they may be born in *Sion*, Ps.87.5. he drave man out of the earthly Paradise, but he sends his messengers after men to bring them into an heavenly Paradise.

Beza in Eph.2.

Use 2. Though God send out ministers to bring people in, yet they cannot bring them in by any power of their own, it is the spirit of God which leads men into truth, *John* 16. 13. Moral perswasions by men may bring men unto truth, but it must be God's teaching, which brings men into the truth.

Again, though God send his messengers to bring his elect in, yet he can bring them in without any such external helps. *John Baptist* was filled with the Holy Ghost from his Mothers womb. Infants may be taught of God, though they cannot be taught of men.

Use 3. Answer Gods end in sending forth his messengers.

1. *Come in*: let your great care be to be found in Christ, *Phil.* 3. 9. as the body is within the garment, whereby its shame is covered, Christs Righteousness is your Robe. As the souldier is within his armour, defended by it against the assaults of his Adversaries: as we are in Christ, we overcome all spiritual enemies: as the branch is within the Vine, whereby it receiveth sap and vigour from the root. As the water is within the fountain, *John* 4. 14. There is a fresh supply continually.

2. *Abid*

2. *Abide within*, John 15. 4. *Walk in him as ye have received him*, Col. 2. 6. walk in the spirit of Christ, follow not the impulses of your own spirits: The spirits motions appear in spiritual actions; they stir up grace, and keep down sin according to the Rule of the word; walk also in good works, unto which you are created in Christ Jesus, *Eph.* 2. 10. and be not weary of well doing. Come in, or else you will one day be cast out, *Matth.* 8. 12. and unless you abide within, it is a sign you were never truly within, 1 *John* 2. 19. if ye leave good company, and make others your intimate companions, and continue so to do, it is a sad sign you were never truly good.

CHAP. IV.

The poor, & the maimed, & the halt, and the blind.]

IN these words we have the Description of the guests, upon whom God bestows the Gospel-provision. The greater sort of men would have none of it, as their several excuses declare, wherefore the meaner sort of people shall receive it. Πτωχοὺς, the *Poor*,] this word noteth out such as are brought to extream want. *And the maimed.* Ἀναπήρους.] This word signifies such as are defective in

any part of the body.] As the other two words, χωλὸς καὶ τυφλὸς, [the halt and the blind] signifie those particular defects which are in those two parts of the body, the foot, and the eye. This is the proper signification of these words, and the sense of them seems to be, *valde obscuros & contemptibiles*, very obscure and contemptibles. These words are likewise used in a metaphorical sense, as *Poor* in spirit, *maimed* in the soul, or affections, *halt* in opinion, *blind* in understanding. Howsoever I take the words either properly or metaphorically, they come up to one sense, to express the mean and miserable condition of those who partake of the Gospel.

Marlor. in loc.

Observ. God makes choice of very obscure and contemptible persons, he brings those into his favour, who are of no credit, nor esteem in the world, 1 *Cor.* 2. 8, 9, 10. passing by others. Those whom God makes choice of, are

1. Such as are but mean in natural parts; *the foolish things of the world*, in opposition to the wise, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. men that have no great insight into things, and such as the world will scarce vouchsafe to look upon, or such as have not such fore-cast as the Politicians of

the world have: Babes and children in comparison of the wise and prudent of the world, *Matth.* 11.25.

2. Such as are but weak in power, compared with the Potentates of the earth, 1 *Cor.* 1. 27. believers are a company of poor feeble creatures, called Doves and Sheep, creatures void of force. The Church is called *the Congregation of the poor*, Psal. 74.19. destitute of worldly advantages; such as have little, and can do little. Our Saviours attendants were of the meaner sort, *Joseph* the Carpenter, and *Mary* his Wife, *Peter* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John*, fishermen. St. *Basil* brings in Christ thus speaking, I seek for fisher-men, not for Princes; I perswade Mariners, not Potentates.

Ἁλιέας ἐ βασιλέας ἐπιζητῶ ναύτας ἐ δυνάστας τρέπομαι. Basil.

3. Such as are low for birth and breeding. *God choseth the base things of the world*, 1 Cor. 1.28. such as are bred of a mean stock, that there are no Chronicles of their Predecessours, nor any Pedigrees to be found for them upon record, that cannot boast of the gallantry or Gentility of their Kindred, as some do.

4. Such as are meer nothing in mans account,

τὰ ἐξουθενημένα, καὶ τὰ μὴ ὄντα.

1 *Cor.* i. 28. men of no name, that are not esteemed in any reckoning: and such (too) as account themselves of no worth, nothing in their own eyes. The Apostle goes so low in the description of them, as if he could not find a word mean enough to denominate them, and therefore calls them, just nothing.

Quest. *Unto what doth God chuse them?*

Resp. 1. He chuseth them to be possessours of grace; he chuseth the poor of the world to be rich in faith, *Jam.* 2. 5. rich in respect of the Doctrine of faith, wherein they receive the pearl of great price, *Matth.* 13. 46. and rich in respect of the grace of faith, which is very precious.

2. He chuseth them to be heirs of glory, heirs of the kingdom: the kingdom by way of eminency and excellency, none of the kingdoms of the world are like it. Believers are Princes under age, Heads destinate to the Diadem, as *Tertullian* calls them: they are joynt heirs with Christ, *Rom.* 8. 17. Thus God dignifies those that are contemptible in the world.

Quest. *Why doth God chuse thus?*

Resp. 1. To discover the equity of his proceedings with the children of men, as is intimated in that Parable, *Luke* 16. 25. God turns

turns the scales at the hour of death, and causeth them to go up that went down here.

2. To difference the spiritual service of the Gospel from the carnal ordinances of the Levitical Law. Since *John Baptist's* time the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, *Matth.* 11.12. men of all sorts come rushing in upon it. The Publicans, Sinners, Lepers, such as were legally unclean, lept over the Levitical ceremonies, thrusting themselves into the number of the Gospel-converts, the spiritual worshippers. In the time of the Law Lepers were to stand aloof off: the maimed, the lame, and the blind, were not to be used in God's service, *Deut.* 15.21.

3. To confound the world, *viz.* the men of the world in their wisdom and strength, 1 *Cor.* 1.27. making them blush for shame, to think how poor ideots learn the way to happiness in the conscientious practice of that little they know, when they with all their speculative knowledge, discoursing of happiness, miss of it.

4. To exalt himself: that all that glory, may glory in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 1.31. when mean men are exalted, they cannot boast. Though the Senator, if chosen of God, might perhaps boast of his dignity: the Orator of his Eloquence, and the Emperour of his power;

er; yet surely the poor fisher-man being chosen, can boast of nothing but of him who made choice of him, saith *Augustine*.

August.

5. To conform the members to the Head; now consider how poor he was, who was the first-born of God's chosen: A Carpenter's Wife was his Mother: When he was born, he was laid in a manger instead of a Cradle: when he was grown up, he had not wherewith to lay his head.

6. To shew the soveraign pleasure of God; it is so, because so it seemeth good in his sight, *Matth.* 11.25,26.

CHAP. V.

Use 1. HEre see that no kind of defects need keep off any from closing with the Gospel, as

1. Not *civil defects*, as want of worldly wealth. The poorest need not scruple coming, those that have no money may come and welome, *Isa.* 55.1. the Gospel-provision is not an ordinary, where ye pay for what ye have, but as a Feast, whereto ye are freely invited, and whereat you may fully feed.

2. Not *corporal defects*, as want of limbs. The maimed, the lame, and the blind, need not

not scruple coming. The man sick of the Palsie was healed both in his body and soul, *Luke* 5.25.

3. Not *mental defects*; as want of wit: though you cannot so fully express your mind before God as others, yet fall down before him.

4. Not *moral defects*, as want of good manners, not leading a well-ordered life. The lewdest persons need not scruple coming. Publicans, Sinners, Extortioners, Harlots, are received by Christ when they come unto him, *Matth.* 21.31,32. it is lawful for the most notorious sinners to believe; and great sinners have become notable Saints.

Secondly, here ye may see, that God in his chusing is different from Satan, and from men in their chusing: Satan makes choice of the craftiest Heads, and subtillest instruments to carry on his designs, *Gen.* 3.1. he picks out a *Goliah* for strength, an *Achitophel* for policy to do his work. And no wonder! for he cannot make men fit for his turn, when he doth not find them so: he cannot put new abilities into men, though he doth excite those abilities which are in them. Therefore he chuseth men fit for his turn, seeing he cannot make them fit. So men in their several choices, they

they avoid defects as near as they can.

Use 2. Yet all that God chuseth, are not obscure persons: God chuseth some to grace and glory, that are very eminent in the world. *Abraham* the father of the faithful; *Isaac* the heir of the Promise; *Jacob* the man powerful with God, were all very rich. The elect Lady, 2 *John* 1. *honourable women, and men not a few believed*, Act. 17. 12. So God chuseth some to be eminent in piety, who are eminent in natural parts, and moral accomplishments. Such a one was St. *Paul*, of whom *Porphyry*, that great enemy to Christianity, said, it was pity such a man as *Paul* should be cast away upon the Christian Religion.

Now as God doth not make choice of none but mean persons, so neither doth he make choice of all that are mean. Many are deformed in their minds as well as in their bodies, such as *Thersites* in *Homer*. Do we not see many poor people live and die in gross ignorance and wickedness? *David* saith, the abjects gathered themselves against him, *Psal.* 35. 15. sawcy dust, (as one calls them) who will be flying in the faces of God's people. And the rage of such many times proves the more furious for want of an ingenious disposition, and civil education.

Use

Use 3. Doth God make choice of mean persons, then hearken unto this, ye that are mean in the world and not good, this Doctrine tells you of a way, whereby your outward wants may be supplyed with spiritual abundance: You that are deformed and decrepit, look into the glass of God's word, and dress your souls by that glass. As you should labour to supply your outward wants with spiritual excellencies, so you should labour to see your spiritual wants by your outward wants.

Secondly, ye that are poor and godly; that are decrepit and deformed in your body, and yet adorned with the graces of God's spirit in your souls, learn to spiritualize your outward wants: though the world neither know you, nor regard you, yet you are both known and esteemed of by the Lord: and though you possess little or nothing of the world, yet possessing God, you possess all things. Bless God for giving you spirituals, though he hath denyed you temporals: ye may rejoyce in the God of all mercies, when you have not many outward mercies to rejoyce in, *Habak.* 3. 17, 18. Expect a change for the better, death will perfect the souls of Saints: after death the spirits of just men are made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. The Resurrection will perfect the bodies

bodies of Saints: the weak body is raised in power, 1 *Cor.*15.43. the crooked body will be raised streight: the maimed body will be raised whole; the Resurrection will cure all infirmities: the thought of which comforted the Martyrs, when they gave their bodies to be burnt to ashes. At *Stratford-bow* in Queen *Maryes* dayes were burnt at one stake, a lame man, and a blind man,. The lame man after he was chained, bid the blind man be of good comfort, for they should both be healed.

Ye that are not mean in the world, do not ye despise whom God makes choice of, *Jam.* 2. 5, 6. *He that desspiseth the poor, despiseth his Maker*, Prov.17.5. he contemneth the wise dispensation of God, who would have the world consist of hills and valleys, of high and low people intermingled. And he that despiseth the godly. Poor, defaceth the image of God twice, despising the immateriality and immortality of God upon the man, and despising the holiness and Righteousness of God stampt upon the new man.

Let both high and low consider, that these outward degrees are only calculated for this world; the Grave takes away all civil differences, *Job* 3.19. Bodies under ground are alike. The dust of the rich and poor inter-

termingleth; one is not known from the other. Besides, many that are now despicable, will appear honourable at the great day: Those that are now so obscure, that they are lost in the count of the world, shall be taken into the arms of Christ, and made much of before all the world, 1 *John* 3. 1, 2. *Luke* 12. 8.

Serm. XIV.

Luke 14. 22.

And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, &c.]

CHAP. I.

IN this verse are two things for the further explaining this Parable. 1. The relation of what is done by vertue of the Gospel. 2. The notification that more may be done. Concerning the first, the Relation is made by way of Report unto him, who sends out the messengers of the Gospel. *And the servant said, Lord.*] Which phrase, for

for the substance of it we met with in the former verse. The matter related, which we are now to enquire after, relates to the latter part of the former verse: As if the servant should have said, Lord, thou biddest us go out quickly, and bring in hither the blind, the maimed, &c. *Behold Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded.*] This particle [As] is a note of similitude and of verity. The sense may be therefore just like unto the command. This word [command] is an injunction by Authority, according to which the messengers of the Gospel must act in all they do.

Ὡς est adverbium similitudinis et veritatis.

Obser. What God will have done, is done by the ministry of the Gospel, *Act.* 10.42.

I. What God will have done declaratively in the offer of grace unto souls, when he saith, go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the City, it is done as he hath commanded: and this is done by the Gospel-ministery.

1. By their accepting that office which God calls them to; *Lord, it is done*, I am ready to do thy work, which thou giveſt me in charge: *here I am, send me.*

2. By

2. By their calling upon people to receive that Doctrine which is prepared to them from the Lord. *Lord, it is done*; what I received from thee, I delivered to them, 1 *Cor.* 11.23. Those talents thou entrustedst me with, I have improved for the advancement of the world's Saviour, and for the advantage of sinners in the world. I have not defrauded any souls of their due, *Act.* 20. 20, 27. the mystery of the Gospel hath been revealed to them.

3. By their beseeching people to walk answerable to that Doctrine which God sendeth to them. *Lord, it is done*, I have been with them, I have gently handled them, and lovingly entreated them, as thou commandedst me, *Rom.* 12.1.

4. By their waiting on people who are bad, to see if God in his due time will make them better. *Lord, it is done*, though thou sendedst me among despicable creatures, I was willing to wait upon them to attend thy service, 2 *Tim.* 2. 24, 25, 26. I condescended to my inferiours, I did bear with the weak, I was patient towards the obstinate, I was willing to deny my self any way wherein I did not deny the truth; I was willing to become all things to all men, if by any means I might win some.

II. What God will have done effectually in the work of grace upon souls: when he saith, bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, &c. it is done as he hath commanded. But this is done by the Ministers of the Gospel instrumentally, and principally by the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5. it is done by vertue of God's ordinance with them, and his blessing upon them.

Apostoli prædicationis Evangelicæ reti colligerunt omnes bonos viros Judæos. Irenæus.

CHAP. II.

THe work of grace is also done upon the hearers of the Gospel thus.

1. The danger by nature is over, the worst is past; they have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust: they are got out of prison, the shackles of their ignorance and disobedience are knockt off, and they set in a state of liberty.

2. The happiness of heaven is purchased for them, and bequeathed to them, *Eph.* 1. 14. *John* 17. 24. Christ hath paid for it, and is willing to bestow it upon them, wherefore those that have him, are said to have life, 1 *John* 5. 12.

3. The

3. The desires of their souls are satisfied as to the truth of what they desire, though still they desire more, as to the perfecting of what they have fixt upon, *John* 4. 14. They thirst no more after another kind of happiness, though still they thirst after more degrees of this kind of happiness.

4. The disposal of all things here below is for their good, *Rom.* 8. 28. poison sometimes is an ingredient into a medicine, and it doth well, where there is a skilful hand to mingle correctives with it.

Venenum aliquando pro remedio fuit, quicquid ad me venerit, bonum fiet. Senec.

Quest. 1. *Why must that be declared by the Ministry of the word, which God would have declared?*

Resp. 1. Because God is Lord and Master unto the messengers of the Gospel; they are his servants, as in our Text, and therefore must speak nothing but what he commandeth.

2. All divine truths are inspired of him; therefore whatsoever any give out in matters of salvation, must be according to what he hath given forth in the sacred Scripture, either immediately from Texts of Scripture, or mediately by undeniable deductions from those Texts.

3. How can it be otherwise? *for the Lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesie?* Amos 3. 8. So *Paul, we knowing the terrour of the Lord, perswade men,* 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11. wherefore the Prophets of old did readily do what God commanded, though the things were of such a nature as seemed ridiculous, and might expose them to contempt and scorn, *Ezek.* 12. 7.

Quest. 2. *Why is that effectually done, which God will have effected by the ministry of the word?*

Resp. 1. To shew, that *the election hath obtained it,* though the rest are hardened, *Rom.* 11. 7. what God decreeth, is brought to pass. The Election is sure, the Lord makes it known, that he knows who are his.

2. To shew the irresistibleness of divine working: God worketh, and who can let? *Isa.* 43. 13. No bolts or bars on mans heart can keep him out, when he is pleased to take possession of the heart.

3. To shew the tenour of the Covenant of grace in the work of grace upon the soul. Lord, 'tis done as thou commandest. This is according to the Covenant of grace, *I will be your God, and ye shall be my people,* Heb. 8. 10. I will have it so, and it shall be so; it is but a word, and a work with God.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Use 1. THis shews us, what an unreasonable thing it is for any to be angry with the messengers of the Gospel, for declaring what God commandeth them. Some are angry, when the word of God by us his messengers comes close to them, striking at their beloved sins. Alas we cannot help it, we are but servants, and upon pain of our Masters displeasure must do what he commandeth us, deliver his message, be it pleasing or displeasing.

This also informs us, that God sets his seal to the ministry of the Gospel. The work of conversion is effectually done according to his command: he owneth the ministry, whether men will own it or no, 1 *Cor.* 9. 2.

Use 2. Yet for all this, the Gospel is hid to many, 2 *Cor.* 4. 2, 3. as it is with the Sun in the firmament, it is often hid in a cloud, when it shines in the air. So it is with the Sun-shine of the Gospel, it is veiled to some, when it shineth round about them.

Use 3. Hearken to the will of God revealed to you in scriptural exhortations, *Prov.* 4. 1. yea so hear, that your souls may live. As Ministers must preach, so people must hear

according to the command of God. It is a Rule in Divinity, that active verbs are given to those things which do not properly, and by an immediate influx effect that which the verbs do signifie, but do concur to the same. God said to *Moses* lift up thy rod, stretch out thine hand over the Sea, and divide it, *Exod.* 14.16. Had *Moses* power to divide the sea? No, but because there was a certain concurrence of *Moses*, using the rod according to direction, therefore that is attributed to *Moses*, which was the work of God alone. In this sense of the use of means according to direction, must those places of Scripture be understood, which bid man believe, repent, *&c.*

Labour also to feel the will of God effected in you in a real conversion. Make tryal of by this your keeping God's commandment.

Zanch.

Zanchy well observeth, there is a threefold keeping the commands: The first is perfect and compleat, as Christ upon earth did, and the Saints in heaven do. The second is imperfect, but yet sincere, as the Saints on earth do. The third is external only and unsound, as the hypocrites on earth do. In the first sense it is impossible for us in this life to keep the commandments; yet this impossibility is not by reason of the Laws ri-

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gidness, but by reason of our corruption. In the third sense, it is sinful keeping the commandments, when we rest in externals. But in the second sense, it is possible, and honourable to keep the commandments. It is possible upon this double account, the will being accepted for the deed, and the failings in all our duties being pardoned through Jesus Christ.

Wherefore answer this Doctrine by your sincere obedience, that ye may be able to say, *Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded.* Therefore do not only what God hath commanded, but do it as God hath commanded it: So do the work of grace, that the fruits of the same may appear continually to be done by you, see that your obedience be according to the full latitude of God's Law, whose law is exceeding broad.

CHAP. IV.

And yet there is room.]

THe servant having related what had been done of the preaching and prevalency of the Gospel, he addeth these words by way of notification, that more was yet to be done. *And yet*] that is, notwithstanding the conver-

sion of so many *Jews*, or the gathering in the wandring and lost sheep of the house of *Israel*. *There is room*] that is, for the *Gentiles*, those of any Nation that shall embrace the Gospel. There is room, or place: properly signifying that which containeth, circumscribeth, and terminateth our bodies, and it doth figuratively signifie the seat or heads of Arguments. They are called Topicks, or Common-places; the boundaries of reasonings, containing the grounds and foundation of discourse. This phrase [*yet there is room*] signifies the superabounding of divine grace spoken of before, under the notion of a Feast, or great Supper. *And yet*] that implyeth, that many were already brought in to partake of this great Supper, this Gospel-provision. *There is room*] this sheweth the sufficiency of it, to feed, and to satisfie many more.

Τόπος ὅτι τὸ πρῶτον περιχῶν ἐν τοῖς σωμάτων περιοριζόμενον. Aug.

Observ. Notwithstanding the many that have been brought in by the power of the Gospel, yet there is rome for more, *Acts* 2. 39.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THat many have been brought in thus appeareth.

1. This way of bringing men in began very early in the world. Christ being the Lamb slain virtually in the first age of the world, *Rev.* 13. 8. *Abel* offered up acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, *Gen.* 4. 4. witnessing his Righteousness in this Gospel-sense, *Heb.* 11. 4. God testifying either by fire from heaven, or some other visible expression of his gracious acceptation, whereby *Abel's* faith was confirmed touching life and salvation through Christ. Since that time many more have been brought in.

2. God brought in many eminent persons in the old Testament, for this very end, that they might be instrumental to bring in others. God saith of *Abraham*, I know him, that he will command his children, and his houshold after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, *Gen.* 18. 19. and he had an eminent Son for Religion, *viz.* *Isaac*, and a choice servant, *viz.* *Eleazar*, so *Joshua* saith, *I and my house will serve the Lord:* So for the good Prophets, and the good Kings. The conversion of some choice ones, proves

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eminenly instrumental for the good of many.

3. Multitudes have been brought in together at the same time, and the same place: about three thousand in one day at St. *Peter's* Sermon, *Act.* 2.41. and the Lord added daily to his Church such as should be saved, *ver.* 47. Sometimes whole families together. The Goaler believed in God with all his house, *Act.* 16. 34. So *Lydia*, and *her household*.

4. The Apostles did according to their commission preach the Gospel in all Nations, and had very good success: witness the many Churches that were formed in several Countries, unto whom many of the Epistles in the new Testament are directed. The door of faith was opened unto the *Gentiles*, Act. 14. 27. at which door the King of glory comes into the soul of man.

5. In the darkest times both in the old and new Testaments, when very few appeared, there were thousands that kept close to the true God. Seven thousand that did not submit to *Baal*, 1 King. 19. 18. There were an hundred forty and four thousand sealed ones; such as did not submit to Antichrist and his false worship, *Rev.* 7. 4. if it be thus in the dark times, what is it in the clear ages for Gospel-light?

Yet

Yet notwithstanding so many have been brought in, there is yet room for more in that house where Gospel-provision is made ready, *viz.* in *Mount Sion*, the Church of God, where there is the Feast of fat things for all people, *Isa.* 25. 6. This house hath two stories. The lower rooms, where God communicates himself in the use of means, *the Church militant.* The upper rooms, where God communicats himself immediately, *the Church triumphant*: and in both these parts of God's house, there is room for more than are in them.

I. In the Church militant, yet there is room.

1. In the hearts of the faithful preachers of the Gospel, they wish well to the souls of their hearers. *O ye Corinthians, ye are not straitned in us*, 2 Cor. 6. 11, 12. that is, ye have room enough in our hearts. Our serious thoughts run more of you, than yours do of your selves.

ἐ στενοχωρεῖσθε *non habitatis angustè in nobis.* So *Piscator* renders it.

2. There is room in those Ordinances that are dispensed by the Ministers of the Gospel. Wisdom's gates are wide enough to receive all that come, *Prov.* 8. 34. The Gospel is preached, that all Nations may be discipled, and

and that all who partake of the Covenant of grace, may partake of the seals of it, *Matth.* 28.19. And when particular Churches grow so numerous, that they cannot conveniently meet together in one place, for the participation of Ordinances; then like Bees swarming, they are to be gathered, and seated under several hives, that still we may say, *yet there is room.* This is a warrantable propogation of Churches, not a sinful separation from Churches.

3. There is room in the vertue of Christ's bloud, and riches of God's grace, which is held forth in Ordinances, *Rom.* 5. 20, 21. Christ's bloud is as fresh as ever it was in the day wherein it was shed; it is that new and living way to heaven, *Heb.* 10. 19, 20. which never waxeth stale: and what wonderful Cures hath it wrought? and the grace of God is as free, as full, and efficacious, as ever it was.

II. In the Church triumphant yet there is room.

There are many mansions, *John* 14. 2. The word in the Syriack Testament for *mansions*, signifies an *Inn* or publick place. An Inn is a common

NJJN *diversorium.*

There are so many mansions in heaven, as would suffice *infinitis mundis.* Rolloc.

mon receptacle for travellers, so is heaven for Saints, who are pilgrims and strangers upon earth, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. Christ, when he came into the world, was laid in a manger; because there was no room for him nor *His* in the Inn: but when he went out of the world, he went to such an Inn, or publick place, where there is room enough for him and all his, whether believers of divers Countries come, *Rev.* 5. 9. There is room enough. 1. *Objectively*: without us, God fully communicating himself to the Saints above, 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. the joys of heaven are as the very spirits of things extracted of very great worth, and efficacy. 2. *Subjectively*: within us. The understanding widened, clearly to know God, 1 *Cor.* 13. 13. the will widened fully to love God.

CHAP. VI.

Use 1. THis informs us, that when any who hear the Gospel do perish, it is not through any scantiness of the Gospel-provision, but for want of applying that provision. Consider it seriously, if ye be shut out of heaven, it is not for want of room in heaven, but for want of faith in your hearts, *Heb.* 12. 19. *Esau* found no place for repentance;

tance; no wonder they find no room or place in heaven when they die, who find no place for faith, or repentance, or other graces whiles they live. The coming short of Christ and holiness, makes men fall short of heaven and happiness.

This also informs us, that there is more room than company, more provision than guests at the Gospel-feast. *There is bread enough, and to spare*, Luke 15. 17. it is likened to a fountain, out of which there is more water runs waste than is made use of.

Though Gospel-grace be full and free, and all men need it, yet many there be that make no account of it; they are wholly enslaved to their sense, and taken up with lower things: heavenly things seem to be too far distant, to work upon their affections; they see the world, but they see not God, nor Christ, nor their souls, nor everlasting glory.

Use 2. Though yet there is room, yet we know not how long there may be any room for us: we had need therefore be careful, lest any should seem to come short of it, *Heb.* 4. 1. Those that knock after the door is made fast, must go away as they came, *Luke* 13. 25. those that stay so late till the bridg be drawn up, cannot get over the water. Christ is now as

a bridge to heaven: if we make us of him in time, well and good, but know, this bridge will be drawn up, and then you must stay on this side happiness. There is a great gulph between heaven and hell, and no bridge to get over it, as there is here between earth and heaven, *Luke* 16.26.

Secondly, though there be room in heaven, and Christ is gone to prepare a place for us, yet we must not conceive of heaven as an house like ours, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. consisting of many rooms, and those not yet furnished or finished; but the mention of many mansions, and great preparations, is for the setting off the excellency of heaven, and for the raising up our expectations.

Use 3. Then do not perish in the midst of such plenty: turn not the grace of God into wantonness, as some do to their own destruction, do not transpose or remove it from its ordinary end and use, from Gospel-ends, so as to cast off obedience to the Law of God. Return unto God, who is thus provided to entertain those that come unto him. This use the Prodigal makes of that consideration, Bread and to spare in his father's house.] *I will arise, and go to my father,*

μετατιθέντες, μεταφυτεύοντες, παραφυτεύοντες. Oecumen.

Luke

Luke 15. 17, 18. why will ye expose your selves to storms and tempests, when there is room enough to house you, and shelter you? why will ye feed upon husks, upon emty trash with the swine without, when you may live like men, and fare like God's children, feeding upon the spiritual delicates of the Gospel? Make room now for the Gospel in your hearts that there may be room made for you in heaven.

1. Make room for the messengers of the Gospel. *Receive* us, saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 7.2. the word χωρήσατε, signifies, make room for us. Why? we have wronged, corrupted, defrauded no man, neither in name, judgment, nor estate. Place us therefore in your hearts, as you are in ours. Their feet are beautiful, who bring the glad-tidings of peace, *Rom.* 10. 15. give them therefore room, or entertainment for their work-sake: house them, prize them, pray for them.

2. Make room for the message of the Gospel: receive not the grace of God in vain, 2 *Cor.* 6. 1. let it appear that the grace of the Gospel is operative within you: and know this, that this grace worketh most kindly and properly, when it orders your conversation in holiness, and raiseth your expectation to happiness.

3. Make

3. Make room for the Mediator of the Gospel. Great Princes have their harbingers go before, crying make room, make room, set open the door of your hearts, that the King of glory may enter in, *Psal.* 24. 7. as they of old were to open their gates, that the Ark, called elsewhere the glory (the Type of Christ) might enter in Let your understanding, will, memory, affections, conscience, be all free to entertain Christ: resign up all to him, that he may do what he will with you.

4. If you would have room in the kingdom of God, let the kingdom of God have room within you, that kingdom which consisteth in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, *Rom.* 14. 17. That righteousness which is implanted by the spirit of grace, and expressed in the life of grace. That peace, whereby the members of Christ's mystical body do sweetly agree together. That joy, whereby we delight in such righteousness and peace.

Use 4. This Doctrine is consolatory.

1. If we look at God's Elect yet not called.

There is room enough to entertain all the Elect of God as they come in, one after another. *God shall enlarge Japhet, and he shall dwell*

in the Tents of Shem, Gen. 9. 27. and Christ saith, *other sheep I have, them also I must bring, and there shall be one fold*, John 10. 16. a fold big enough to hold them all.

2. If we look at the called ones, who are at present straitned.

Hereafter they shall be so enlarged, as to have room enough, here they are straitned.

1. *Outwardly* straitned: so much the Greek word στενοχωρεῖς signifyeth, 2 *Cor.* 6. 4. translated distresses: as it were in Little Ease, pent up, so that they know not which way to turn. I have read of a French Martyr, who was pent up in such a narrow room for seven weeks together in *Paris*, that he could neither sit nor lie down. Sometimes they are straitned in their Estates, kept at short allowance: but hereafter there will be room enough.

2. *Inwardly* straitned: straitned in their knowledge, knowing but in part, and that darkly, but hereafter it will be fully and clearly, 1 *Cor.* 13. 11, 12. straitned also in their obedience: there is some reluctancy in their obedience: while the mind is for serving the Law of God, the flesh is for serving the Law of sin, *Rom.* 7. 25. The unregenerate part pulls backward, while the regenerate part puts us forward to any good. So likewise strait-

ſtraitned in love, and other graces, the comfort is, that theſe graces will act with more ſcope or room in heaven: Oh welcome that happy day.

SERM. XV.

Luke 14. 23.

And the Lord ſaid unto the ſervant, Go out into the high-ways, and hedges, &c.]

CHAP. I.

THe two former invitations, *ver.* 16. & 21. were to the *Jews*; this latter is to the *Gentiles*. In which invitation of the *Gentiles*, we have 1. The deſignation of the meſſenger ſent to invite them; the ſame that was ſent to the *Jews*. The ſame ſervant from the ſame Lord. *The Lord ſaid to the ſervant, Go out.*] 2. The deſcription of the place of their reſidenc, *The high-ways, and hedges.*] 3. The illuſtration of the manner

Exierunt Apoſtoli extra Judæam ad Gentes. Salmeron.

Hic Gentium vocatio describitur. Marlor. in loc.

of bringing them in. *And compel them to come in.*] 4. The confirmation of the end thereof; *That my house may be filled.*] From the first I observe,

Obser. That the *Gentiles* now have the same Authority and Priviledge to embrace the Gospel, as the *Jews* once had, *Col.* 3. 11. The distinction of *Jews* and *Gentiles* comes not from *Adam*, but from *Abraham*: God called him from his idolatrous kindred, *Gen.* 12. 1. making his Covenant of grace with him and his posterity, renewing and confirming it by the seal of the Covenant, *circumcision*,] Gen. 17. 1, 2, 9, 10. called a seal of the Righteousness of faith, *Rom.* 4. 11. which Covenant, with the seal thereof, was confined to *Abraham* and his posterity, and continued among them till Christ came in the flesh, which posterity of *Abraham* were called by three names. *Heber* from *Hebrews*, as it is judged, out of whose loyns *Abraham* descended. *Israelites* from *Israel*; *Abraham*'s Grand-child. And *Jews* from *Judah*, one of the Sons of *Israel*. Which *Jews* were the Nation by way of eminency. *An holy Nation*, Exod. 19. 6. inhabiting the Land of *Judea*, *Canaan*, the Type of heaven. And all other people who came not from *Abraham*'s loins, were called *Gentes*

the

the Nations of the world, or *Gentiles*. Others say, from the Epithet given to *Abraham*, who is called *Abraham* the *Hebrew*, Gen. 14. 13. עברי from עבר to pass over, or pass through, because from *Mesopotamia* he passed over *Euphrates* into *Canaan*, and so passed through the Land. *Abraham the Hebrew*, or the passenger, or passer-through. This denomination seemeth the more probable, *Heber* being far from *Abraham*, Gen. 11. 17.

CHAP. II.

NOw concerning the priviledges which the *Jews* once had, the Apostle gives us a Catalogue of them, an Inventory of very choice goods, *Rom.* 9. 4. who are *Israelites*, to whom pertaineth,

1. *The Adoption. Israel* was God's first-born, and so higher than the Kings of the earth, *Psal.* 89. 27. Though God had a natural son of his own, yet he adopted the *Jews* out of his abundant grace.

2. *The glory*: the Temple and the Ark so called, 1 *Sam.* 4. 22. because tokens of God's glorious presence, and Types of Christ, the King of glory, whence *Judea* is called the glorious Land, *Dan.* 11. 41. all the while God manifested his presence there: but now

sin hath made it vile enough.

3. *The Covenants*: the moral law in two Tables, or the Covenant of grace often renewed.

4. *The giving of the Law*: the judicial Law for the ordering their common-wealth.

5. *The service*: the ceremonial Law for the ordering of their worship of God. As God had adopted them, so he would have them brought up under his Law, as under a Tutor, *Gal.*4.1.

6. *The promises*: the rich Legacies in the old Testament.

7. *The fathers*: they descended of honourable ancestors, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*.

8. *Christ after the flesh*; who took on him the seed of *Abraham*, Heb. 2.16. as if a King should marry into some poor family of his subjects, and be glad at the match.

CHAP. III.

THat the *Gentiles* have as good leave and priviledge to believe the Gospel, as the *Jews* had, appeareth thus.

1. *Abraham* received the seal of the Gospel-righteousness being uncircumcised, that he might be the father of those who should believe, God being able of such stones to raise up chil-

children to *Abraham*, Matth. 3.9. even of the *Gentiles*, whose hearts were as hard as stones, and who worshipped stocks and stones.

2. The prophesies of old were, that Christ should be a light to the *Gentiles*, Isa. 49. 6. that the eyes of their understanding might be opened to see the way to heaven, and walk in it. And *Isaiah* and *Moses* told the *Jews* so to their face, though they despised the *Gentiles*, Rom. 10. 19, 20. now the Prophecies were all to be fulfilled in due time.

3. *Gentiles* are put into the Genealogy of Christ; it is observable, how among all the men in Christs Genealogy only four women are put in, beside *Mary* the Mother of *Jesus*. two of which were *Gentiles*, *viz.* *Rahab* of *Canaan*, *Ruth* of *Moab*. The other two of the *Jews*, *Thamar* and *Bathsheba*, notorious for incest and adultery. St. *Ambrose* and *Chrysostom* give several reasons for this, as

Vid. *Spanhem. dub. Evang. dub.* 25. *part* 1.

1. To curb the insolency of the *Jews*, to stain their pride, who boasted much of their progenitors.

2. To shew, that no blot in predecessors is an hinderance to vertue in their posterity.

3. To shew, that the greatest sort of sinners are capable of conversion. Christ came from *Gentiles*, and sinners, why then may not *Gentiles* and sinners come unto him?

4. The wise-men of the East, who were *Gentiles* were welcome, when they came to worship Christ the King of the *Jews*: by their gifts they acknowledge Christ, the great propitiatory of the world.

5. Christ, when he preached on earth, had mercy upon a woman of *Samaria*, John 4. and upon a woman of *Canaan*, Mat. 15. 22. she grants she was an heathenish dog, but yet crumbs of mercy she did expect, and she had her desire, with a large Encomium of her faith.

6. Christ by his death hath broken down the partition-wall, *Eph.* 2. 13, 14. that the *Gentiles* might come to the *Jews*, and take those priviledges, which belonged to them as well as to the *Jews*.

7. Christ after his Resurrection did enlarge the commission of preaching the Gospel. Though before there was a restriction in the commission, [*Go not in the way of the Gentiles*] Matth. 10. 5. yet afterwards he bids them *go teach all Nations*, Matth. 28. 19. and *preach the Gospel to every creature*, Mark 16. 15.

8. The

8. The Apostles did *turn to the Gentiles* upon the refusal of the Gospel by the *Jews*, *Act.* 13.46. The *Jews* had the offer of the Pearl of great price, of the purchase of truth, but they made light of it.

9. The *Gentiles* did embrace the Gospel, witness the many Churches that were founded among the *Gentiles*, at *Corinth*, *Rome*, *Ephesus*, *Colosse*, *Phillppi*, *Thessalonica*: and those who did embrace the Gospel, were as compleat in Christ alone, as ever the *Jews* were in all their height, *Col.* 2.10, 11.

CHAP. IV.

Use 1. THis informs us of the unquestionable mystery of the Gospel God manifest in the flesh, preached unto the *Gentiles*, believed on in the world, 1 *Tim.* 3.16. A great mystery, that those who were the profest enemies of God, worshipping dumb idols for so many ages together, should of a suddain become the special friends of God, turn from so many Gods, to cleave to one God. The *Ephesians*, who were much addicted to the black Art, yet the Gospel coming in the power of it to them, it made them burn their conjuring books, though of a very great price, *Act.* 19.18, 19, 20.

Here

Here also ye may see, that God is no respecter of persons. This inference St. *Peter* draws from our Doctrine, *Act.* 10. 34. that is, of their outward estate and condition, as Countrey, Sex, Wealth, *&c.* Outward things neither please nor displease God: but as for inward qualifications, the impressions of his own spirit, and works of Righteousness flowing from the same, those he doth respect, and graciously accept, *ver.* 35. he accepts not one man before another, but he accepts a Saint before a sinner.

Use 2. Though we say the *Gentiles* have now leave to believe, yet we must know, it was allwaies lawfull, for them to embrace the true Religion. Those of them that would, might turn Proselites to the *Jews*, and some did so in severall nations of the world: and in severall ages of the world, before the time of the *Gentiles* general vocation came. As *Jethro* of the *Midianites*: *Job* of the *Uzzites*: *Naaman* of the *Syrians*: *Araunah* of the *Jebusites*: *Urijah* of the *Hittites*: *Ruth* of the *Moabites*: *Cornelius* of the *Romans*: the *Eunuch* of the *Ethiopians*.

Secondly, though we say it is as lawful for the *Gentiles* to believe, as it was for the *Jews*, yet the greater and more learned sort of the *Gentiles* are as backward to believe, as those of

of the *Jews* were. *Have any of the Rulers, or Pharisees believed on him?* John 7. 48. thus it was among the *Jews*: and was it any better among the *Gentiles*? At *Corinth* not many wise, nor mighty, nor noble were called, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. At *Athens* among the Scholars no Church founded. The Philosophers there scoffed at the strangeness of the Gospel, *Act.* 17. 18. Thus it hath been in several ages. *Ulpian*, the chief Lawyer: *Galen*, the chief Physician: *Porphyry*, the chief *Aristotelian*: *Plotinus*, the chief Platonist: *Libanius* and *Lucian*, the chief Orators in that age wherein they lived, were all protest enemies to Christ.

Use 3. Let us *Gentiles* consider of that provision which God hath made in the Gospel for *Gentiles*. 1. *The salvation of God is sent to the* Gentiles, *Act.* 28. 28.—2. *God hath opened the door of faith to the* Gentiles, *Act.* 14. 27. hath acquainted the *Gentiles* with the way of applying the Gospel. 3. St. *Paul*, one of the chief of the Apostles, is called *the Apostle of the* Gentiles, *Rom.* 11. 13. designed of God purposely for the good of the *Gentiles*; to bear God's name *before the Gentiles*, Act. 9. 15. to write God's mind unto the *Gentiles*.

Now

Now let us *Gentiles* bless God for this good news of the Gospel, *Rom.* 15. 9, 10, 11, 12. *Let the Isles be glad, and sing for joy.* Let us of this Island bless God for the plentiful preaching of the Gospel. Let us *Gentiles* make much of the Gospel, be desirous to hear it, and subject our selves to it, *Act.* 13. 42, 48. let us fear, while we consider that the *Jews* were cut off, when the *Gentiles* were graffed in, *Rom.* 11. 20. know this, God hath not tyed his promises so to any mans seed, but that they may be cast off, if they degenerate. And let us *Gentiles* wait and pray for the fulness of the *Gentiles*, and the conversion of the *Jews*, Rom. 11. 25. for the fulness of the *Gentiles*, let us pray, Lord, *Let thy way be known upon earth, and thy saving health among all Nations*, Psal. 67. 2. and for the conversion of the *Jews*: they shall come in, and so *all Israel shall be saved.* That is, the Nation of the *Jews* shall be brought in by the power of the Gospel to profess the Christian Religion, and so many of them shall be actually saved, as belong to the number of God's elect. Though obstinacy lie never so long upon the *Jews*, yet none of them within the Covenant shall be lost. *From Sion shall the deliverer come, &c.* not because he was born there, but because his

Non quia ibi natus, sed quia inde doctrina ejus exivit in

his Doctrine went forth from thence into all the world, saith *Aquinas*. Which sense agrees with the Prophets words, *Isa.* 2. 3. *The law shall go forth of* Sion, *and the word of the Lord from* Jerusalem.

universum mundum. Aquin.

Use 4. This Doctrine is comfortable to the converted *Gentiles*, for they are now fellow-Citizens with the Saints upon earth, *Eph.*2.17. They are admitted into the new *Jerusalem*, which hath twelve gates. That sheweth, that there is every way access unto Christ. They shall hereafter be fellow-inhabitants of the heavenly *Canaan*, with the ancient Patriarchs of the *Iews*. *They shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob in the kingdom of God*, Matth.8.12. sit down with them fellow-like, equal with them. *Abraham* was a great man upon earth, but he is greater in heaven; and the poorest Saint shall be where he is. Poor *Lazarus* sweetly resteth in his bosom.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

[*Into the high-ways and hedges.*]

HEre we have the place described, where the *Gentiles* are to be called; God sends his servant *into the high-ways and hedges.*] As the most despicable of the *Iews* before; so here the out-casts of the *Gentiles* are made partakers of the Gospel-provision. All Interpreters, both Popish and Protestant, do understand hereby the forlorn condition of the *Gentiles*, till God look upon them in mercy: they being like a company of Vagabonds wandring up and down by the high-ways side and hedges; not housed and harboured in a spiritual sense, but scattered about as beggars upon the face of the earth, till God by the power of the Gospel brought them into the Church, to enjoy the priviledges thereof, wandring in their conversation through the vanity of their imaginations. To dwell among

Gentes variis viis errantes. Salmer.
Gentium agrestem populum. Lyra.
Pauperes & mendicos, qui domibus carent. Ravanel.
Loca publica, ubi ambulant homines ignoti & Advenæ. Marlor.
Gentes per orbis terrarum dispersas. Beza.

mong the hedges is in the Scripture put for a mean kind of living, 1 *Chron.* 4. 23. and according to the general acception of the phrase, to abide by the high-ways and hedges is put for a wandring kind of life, *Mark* 10. 46.

Obser. That God sends the messengers of the Gospel to them, who are as vagabonds and out-casts upon the face of the earth, *Mat.* 22.9.

The *Gentiles*, and all by nature are as vagabonds and out-casts.

I. They are such as lead an unwarrantable life, as may thus appear.

1. They move not from any good principle; there is no true understanding with them, no fear of God before them, *Rom.* 3. 11, 18. Hence the *Gentiles* were so sottish, as to account the very stones in the high-ways as Gods, *Ierem.* 17.2. They anointed stones, their bonds and marks of Territories, accounted as sacred trivial statues. *Theophrastus* in his sacred superstition, remembers (for a part) the pouring of oil upon anointed stones, or statues in the high-ways: whereupon *lapis unguine delilutus*, is reckoned by the *Apuleius* among his sacred objects. Therefore the sending the Gospel into the high-ways, may have special reference to the reclaiming of the

the *Gentiles* from their ignorant, prophane, and idolatrous course of life, appearing by their image-worship in the high-ways.

2. They walk not by any good rule; *they are all gone out of the way*, Rom. 3. 12. Vagabonds are lawless creatures, they will submit to no order. Men naturally live contrary to the Law of God: they love to lurk in the high-ways, and by the hedges, without the precinct of good discipline.

3. They tend not to a good end. Men by nature are *altogether become unprofitable*, Rom. 3. 12. like vagabonds, neither minding the common-wealth, nor their own families, for the good of which they ought to live.

II. They are such as lead a miserable life, as may thus appear.

1. They are Aliens, and Strangers to the people of God and their priviledges, *Eph.* 2. 11, 12. Men that wander up and down in high-ways are not priviledged like those who have their setled abode in Towns and Cities. Natural men have no acquaintance with God, nor admittance into his presence, they live beyond the line of communication, as to fellowship with the Saints.

2. Vagabonds are destitute of house and home, void of necessary accommodations for a comfortable passage through this world.

Natu-

Natural men are in no houſe as it were, they live without the pale of the Church, that Church that ſhall be ſaved. As they have no enjoyment of communion with God now, ſo neither have they any hope to enjoy communion with him hereafter, *Eph.* 2. 12. while they are void of grace, they are without hope.

3. They are expoſed to wind and weather, liable to continual danger. Thoſe who are in the high-ways are in the open air, where ſtorms and tempeſts do ariſe. Thoſe that lie in the hedges may ſoon catch their death by colds and ſurfets. Thus natural men are in perpetual danger, caſt out into the wide world, walking according to the Prince of the power of the air, and according to the courſe of this world, *Eph.* 2. 2. There is lurking in hedges, and robbing in high-ways. Thoſe that ſtand in the ſinners way, are never out of harms way.

CHAP. VI.

THe ends why God ſends the Goſpel-meſſengers among theſe vagabonds and out-caſts are theſe,

1. To reclaim them from their vain courſe of life, that they ſhould no longer live

to the lusts of men, to do what they list, 1 *Pet.* 4.1,2,3. God's word gives a check to mens consciences for those unlawful liberties, wherein they allow themselves; it startleth and affrighteth impudent sinners, it stops them, and bids them go no further.

2. To recover them from the great danger, wherin they are by nature, to recover them out of the snare of the Devil. The Gospel snatcheth them out of the hands of the Devil, *Col.* 1,13. men naturally are under the power of Satan, now the Gospel turns men from the power of Satan unto God. Christ came to dissolve the works of the Devil, διαλύσαι, to undo what the Devil had done, too loosen them, and set them at liberty, whom the Devil had bound. This he doth by the ministry of his word.

3. To reduce them to good order, to bring them from the high-ways and hedges unto places of good discipline, where they may observe the order of the Gospel, as thus. 1. In the partaking of the graces of God's spirit in some measure, which are linkt together hand in hand, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4, 5, 6. as Virgins in a dance, *viz.* faith accompanyed with vertue: vertue accompanyed with knowledge or discretion: knowledge accompanyed with temperance: temperance accompanyed

nyed with patience: patience accompanyed with godlineſs: godlineſs accompanyed with botherly kindneſs: and brotherly-kindneſs with charity, or love to all men. 2. In the Participating of ordinances, *Act.* 2. 42. Thoſe that belong to ſuch, are endued with graces. 3. In the performing of duties, leading a well-ordered converſation, *Phil.* 1. 27.

CHAP. VII.

Uſe 1. THis informs us, that the preaching of the Goſpel is not confined to any particular Countrey, as once it was to the Land of *Judea*. *The ſound is gone forth into all the earth*; Rom. 10. 18. Here ye may take notice, that thoſe who are mean and deſpicable outwardly, may be honourable and happy ſpiritually. The high-ways and hedges may afford converts. A certain beggar named *Lazarus*, that lay without doors upon earth is now received into *Abraham's* boſom, *Luke* 16. 20, 22. he was houſeleſs ſaith *Fulgentius*, not Lordleſs; without cloths, not without faith: he wanted food, but wanted not Chriſt to feed upon: he was expoſed

Sine domo, non ſine Domino: ſine veſte; non ſine fide: ſine cibo, non ſine Chriſto: canibus expoſitus, ſed Angelorum ſocius. Fulgent. Epiſt. 2.

to dogs while he lived, but received into the ſociety of Angels when he dyed. A vaſt difference between temporal and ſpiritual eſtate. Here ſee the difference between God's elect before their calling, and after their calling. Before their converſion they are in the high-ways and hedges, where all commers and goers are, among the rude multitude, but after their converſion they are as a Garden encloſed, *Cant.* 4.12. A ſpot of ground taken from the commons of the world. *Jeruſalem is a City compact.*

Here alſo ye may be informed, that man is not in a capacity to merit; he is but as a beggar upon the high-way, covered with filthy rags, yet vain man would merit what is received in mercy. *Vega* ſaid, *non accipiam cœlum gratis*, I will not receive heaven *gratis.*

Uſe 2. Though men by nature are as vagabonds and out-caſts, yet there are very few vagabonds and runnagates indeed that receive the Goſpel: ſuch creatures are uſually curſers and blaſphemers, *Iſa.* 8.21.22. deſpiſers of all good: the ſhameful trade of begging is accompanyed with many vices.

Uſe 3. Let not us who are *ſinners of the Gentiles*, continue in Heatheniſh ways, ſince the grace of the Goſpel is brought unto us,

Act.

Act. 14. 15. Let us remember our former ways, remember that in times past we were *Gentiles in the flesh*, Eph. 2. 11. and let this keep us humble, watchful, and thankful. The profane sinners of the world may serve as so many remembrances to us. *Such were some of you*, saith the Apostle to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 6. 11. see that ye *walk not as other Gentiles walk*, Eph. 4. 17. look upon the sinful lives of others, and be ashamed of their ways.

SERM.

SERM. XVI.

LUKE 14. 23.

——*And compel them to come in*, &c.

CHAP. I.

THese words contain the third particular considerable in this verse, the manner how those who are without do come in to partake of Gospel-provision: it is irresistibly brought about, called here *Compulsion*: Concerning which, we must thus distinguish; There is a magisterial and a ministerial compulsion. St. *Augustine* useth this for the Magistrate's compelling his subjects to the worship of God: but this cannot be so meant here, for the commission is to the messengers or Ministers of the Gospel. Now the ministerial compulsion is either disciplinary or doctrinal. The disciplinary is by such censures inflicted upon those who

Spiritualis est coactio. Calvin.

who walk irregularly, but this course is to be taken with those who are within the pale of the Church, and therefore not so proper for the meaning of these words, which are spoken concerning them who are in the high-ways, and hedges. Wherefore the doctrinal compulsion must be here meant: viz. by the strength of argument, and force of perswasion, and effectual application of the same, which overcomes the soul as powerfully and effectually, as natural compulsion and external violence overcomes the body. Hence I note,

Vis argumentorum & rationum. Salmer.

Observ. That the power put forth in the ministry of the Gospel for mans conversion is by spiritual compulsion, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. *Heb.* 4. 12. This appeareth.

I. By considering the metaphorical expressions, whereby this is illustrated in Scripture.

1. It is called *a pulling out of the fire*, Jude ver. 23. catching hold of men, and rescuing souls from everlasting burnings. The Greek word ἁρπάζοντες, signifies the Souldiers violent rushing, or seizing upon a Town or Castle for some rich booty, or for the delivery of some that are there held Captives.

2. It is called *a pulling down strong holds*, 2 *Cor.*10.4,5. battering those Forts and munitions which man's nature maintains against the revealed will of God: those lofty conceits, whereby man's heart is lifted up against God, but this word is able to overcome them.

Verbis & rationibus trahere. Drusius.

3. It is called *a drawing men after God*, John 6.44. haling them on, who draw back of themselves; drawing them by strong reasons and arguments, such as convince the soul. God compels by perswasion, and perswades by compulsion.

4. It is called *a constraining men unto holiness*, 2 Cor.5.14. where the love of Christ prevails upon men, it keeps them within bounds, that they cannot break out into that looseness as otherwise they would.

II. By considering the proper operations, whereby this is effected, as

1. The propounding arguments contrary to the interests and enclination of man naturally, as self-denyal, taking up the Cross, losing life, and so to gain life and happiness, strange allurements! *Matth.* 16. 24, 25. Christ draweth not his followers by arguments taken from carnal delights, as *Mahomet*

homet doth *His*: the way Christ takes, is contrary to flesh and bloud.

2. The removing what hinders the arguments propounded, and so enclining the will to close with the same, taking away the unpliableness of the heart, and making it pliable, *Ezek.* 11. 19. God in the work of man's conversion doth not only put forth his power in the nature of a moral cause, using arguments of weight, but in the nature of a physical cause, making those arguments effectual by drawing, enclining, and moving the heart, and so working a real change. There goes forth a secret, sweet, and violent power from God to make his exhortations effectual, as when Christ called St. *Matthew* to follow him from his custom-gathering, and bid *Lazarus* come forth out of the grave.

3. The infusing a new principle of life, or habit of grace, an inclination of the soul quite contrary to what was before, 1 *John* 3. 9. it is not some acts, but an habit, by virtue whereof a man is called *godly*, which habit of holiness is placed in the will: for no man is good or evil only, because he understandeth good or evil things (as *Aquinas* well observeth) but therefore a man is called good

or evil, because he willeth those things that are good or evil.

4. The acting of this new principle, contrary to natural inclinations, with the mind serving the law of God while the flesh is for serving the law of sin, *Rom.* 7. 25. A man is carryed by force, when he is moved contrary to his enclination, such a divine force worketh in the spiritual man.

The reasons why it is thus, are these.

1. To shew the infallible conjunction of the effect with the cause, of our conversion with God's quickning grace, *John* 6. 45. the grace of God is not in vain.

2. To shew the efficacy of a divine ordinance, accompanyed with Gods blessing, it is the power of God unto salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16.

3. To shew that the glory of man's conversion is not at all to be attributed to man's self, but altogether unto God. The work is wholly of God, *Rom.* 9. 16. if man doth not share in the work, he should not share in the praise.

Object. *Why are no more converted at Sermons?*

Resp.

Resp. The election hath obtained it, and the rest are hardened. The Gospel is hid to them that are lost, the God of this world blinding their minds, 2 *Cor.* 4. 3, 4. old *Adam* proves too hard for young *Melanchon*: the ministry of the word cannot do it, if God withdraw his influence.

CHAP. II.

Use 1. THis sheweth us man's backwardness to be saved, and God's forwardness to save him. The Angel laid hold upon *Lot* and his family, while they lingred in *Sodom*, God being merciful to them: so while men trifle away their time in their natural estate, God seizeth upon them by the ministry of the Gospel, crying to them, *Save your selves from this untoward generation*, Act. 2. 40.

Here also ye may see, that God's power is greater to make man close with good, than the power of Satan to make man close with evil, 1 *John* 4. 4. Satan hath but a tempting and enticing power, but God hath a compelling and enforcing power: Satan may be overcome, if he be resisted; but God overpowereth and overcometh man. Dr. *Preston* saith,

faith, the Patrons of nature do put God into the same straits, as *Darius* was in, when *Daniel* was in the Den, who would have saved him, but could not tell how (with which conceit King *James* was well-pleased) for, (say they) the will of man is only excited by moral or assisting grace knocking at the door of it, and admonishing it, not that it is changed by habitual grace renewing and healing it. But this Text of ours, and many more tell us, that God, not only by moral persuasions, but by infused grace, turneth sinners to himself after an irresistible manner; *Eph.* 2. 1. *Phil.* 2. 13. *Rom.* 9. 16.

Use 2. Yet notwithstanding the will is not compelled. This is a known maxime; the will in natural things, though it always follow the dictates of the understanding, yet acteth most freely: the understanding doth not force it so to do. In spiritual things the will is conformed according to it's essential property of liberty, freely to make choice of the best things. God worketh upon man as a rational creature, and so man is made willing. Yet here observe, that though the will cannot be compelled in its elicit act, or free choice,

Voluntas sequitur rationem, ut indicativum, non ut impulsivum.

choice, yet it may be compelled in the commanding act. As when the persecutors drew the Martyrs against their will before their Idols, putting incense into their hands to burn. So Christ saith to St. *Peter, They shall draw thee whither thou wouldest not*, John 21.

Now though conversion be wrought thus necessarily, yet conditions are required unto salvation, *Heb.* 12. 14. but the conditions are of God's working, not of man's. Here observe, that which is conditional, may be necessary in the effect and event. *If any of you go out of the ship, ye shall all perish*, Act. 28. but if ye stay in the ship, ye shall be all saved. It behoves us to abide in faith and holiness, if we would be saved, and to be free and voluntary in our spirits therein, not haled and pulled to spiritual duties, compelled thereto only by external arguments.

Conditionale potest esse in effectu.

Use 3. Yield your selves unto God, who useth a compelling power to enforce or perswade you unto good, *Rom.* 6. 13. yield your selves as his prisoners of hope: Throw away your weapons, rebel no more, as *Chosroes* King of *Parthia*,

Deus facit volunta-rios, non salvat invitos. Bern.

thia, who being subdued by the *Romans*, made a law that none of his successours should ever wage war with them again. Seize upon the kingdom of heaven by an holy violence: take it by force, be instant in serving God day and night, *Act.* 26. 7. Think no pains too great, nor charge too costly, which is employed in God's service: offer violence to your dull souls, when they are backward, pray that the word of God in the Ministery thereof may have a free course, 2 *Thes.* 3. 1. and put forth your power in your places for the good of others souls.

CHAP. III.

That my house may be filled.]

THis clause carryeth in it the final cause of all the three former particulars in the verse. If the words immediately before [compel them to come in] be meant of sanctification, through the powerful perswasion of the word converting the soul, then these words must be meant of glorification, which is begun here, and perfected hereafter, which Christ calleth, many mansions in his father's house, *John* 14. 2. Hence I note,

Obs. God would therefore have the Gospel

ſpel preached, and ſouls converted, that heaven may be filled, *Coloſ.* 1.27,28,29.

It appeareth that God would have heaven filled.

I. *Objectively*: by the glory which is there provided; As the object of happineſs to be enjoyed, of which glory heaven is full. Now this is a maxim, that God and nature make nothing in vain. Heaven therefore being full of glory, it muſt therefore be filled with ſuch as are capable to enjoy it. That heaven is full of glory appeareth. 1. *Typically*, in the Tabernacle and Temple, the Types of this heavenly houſe: both which are ſaid to be filled with the glory of the Lord, *Exod.* 40. 34. 1 *King.* 8.10,11.—2. *Metaphorically*, heaven is here called an houſe, and it is a ſpacious houſe, and very durable, eternal in the heavens, 2 *Cor.* 5.1. it is an houſe, where is no want of room, nor need of repair, accommodation is there to the full, and there for ever. 3. *Properly* and *plainly*. There God is all in all, 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. that is *immediately*, without the helps of ordinances, or means of grace.

II. *Subjectively*: by the Inhabitants which there are, and ſhall be to poſſeſs that glory which is there provided: here let us conſider. 1. The

1. The vast company which is there already; an innumerable company of Angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, enjoying their happiness *with God the Judge of all, and Jesus, the Mediatour of the new Covenant*, Heb. 12. 22, 23, 24. Unto which beloved society believers are said now to come, in respect of their spiritual conjunction with Christ's mystical body.

2. The several sorts of sanctifyed ones, which are in the way to heaven, and are daily going thither, as is intimated in those Beatitudes, in *Matth.* 5. *viz.* the poor in spirit, the mourners for sin, the meek and lowly, those that hunger and thirst after righteousness, those that are merciful, those that are pure in heart, and actively pure, such as are peace-makers, such as are persecuted for righteousness sake. Thus we must consider these several sorts, which make up the reckoning in that number which daily filleth heaven.

3. The bodies of the Saints shall be raised to be glorifyed with their souls, 1 *Thes.* 4. 17. and those heavens that contain the body of Christ, must contain the bodies of Christians.

4. Their

4. Their souls and bodies shall be filled with glory.

Their *Souls* thus.

1. With the fulness of grace, as of *knowledge*, wherewith their understandings shall be full, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. reaching the top of divine truth; of *love*, wherewith the wills and affections shall be full, embracing most intimately the chiefest good.

2. With the fulness of joy, Psal. 16. 11. All sin, and all sorrow cease together.

Their *Bodies* thus.

1. They shall be filled with *immortality*: raised in *incorruption*, 1 Cor. 15. 42. they shall die no more.

2. With *dignity*: raised in *glory*, ver. 43. no part of the body then shamefully needing a cover as now it doth.

3. With *agility*: raised in *power*, able to go through the service of God without weariness.

4. With *Spirituality*: raised a *spiritual* body, *ver.* 44. not maintained by natural helps of food, Physick, sleep, *&c.* but kept by the power of God. Then body and soul making

one person; shall serve and obey God without interruption for ever.

The reasons why it is thus, are

1. The filling of heaven is decreed of God, and therefore must be effected. Though many Angels left *their own habitation*, Jude *ver.* 6. yet their habitation abideth to be possessed by others. There is not (as some observe) the least atom of grace or glory intended for the creature, lost to the universality, though forfeited by the individuals; for what was retracted, as to the extent of it to more, was supplyed by the intensiveness of it in the fewer; whereby the divine justice was fully displayed, and the bounty not at all diminished. And as the creatures find no abatement of happiness conferred upon them, so neither shall the Creator find any abatement of homage attributed to him.

2. The preaching of the Gospel, and converting of souls, is the only way to fill up heaven; for this is the way to have *Christ in us, the hope of glory*, Col. 1. 27. This is the way to be joyned to that Church, which is the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all, *Eph.* 1. 22, 23.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Use 1. HOw may this ſupport us under all our loſſes and ſufferings. What though we be caſt out of houſe and home, and loſe all for the Goſpel, yet if we help fill heaven when we are gone from hence, will not that make amends? *Heb.* 10. 34. what if we ſhould live in a world filled with violence and oppreſſion, as the old world was, *Gen.*6.13. yet God hath an Ark for *Noah*, an heaven for Saints; what, though we ſhould be filled with ſcorn and contempt as *Iſrael* was, *Pſal.* 123.3,4. yet there is exceeding joy in the preſence of God, *Jude* ver.24.

Use 2. Though heaven ſhall be filled with inhabitants, yet it ſhall be without any annoyance to thoſe inhabitants. We muſt not conceive that houſe above, where Saints immediately attend God's ſervice, like theſe houſes below, where we attend upon God in the uſe of means. Hear, when an houſe is filled, people are crowded; they ſtand and ſit in Little Eaſe; ſo that the very attendance upon means for the ſoul, is not without ſome annoyance to the body: but it ſhall not be ſo in heaven. That houſe is not an houſe made

with hands, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. but eternal in the heavens, it is of an everlasting continuance, and of a very vast circumference, without the least inconvenience.

Use 3. Let us live as those upon earth, who shall help fill heaven hereafter, let us be cleansing our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and so be perfecting holiness upon earth, which is the ready way to perfection of holiness in heaven, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. This is like wiping the feet before we enter a room kept clean and fair. No unclean thing must enter heaven, as full as it will be. *Without are dogs*, Rev. 22. 15. the fittest place for them! what should they do within? Men that live like dogs here, must fare like dogs hereafter: heaven is no kennel for dogs, but a Palace for Kings, for Saints, who are Kings and Priests unto God. Let us look to be filled with the fruits of righteousness; to be filled with such fruits here, is to be fitted for glory hereafter. Grace (like Grapes) grows by clusters. A cluster of these grapes of *Canaan* we may view, *Gal.* 5. 22. and we must look to be filled with such fruits now, if we would have heaven filled with us hereafter; it is called *the fruit of the Spirit*, such fruit as doth not grow in Natures Garden.

1. *Love*,

1. *Love*,] the bond of perfectness. As the Curtains of the Tabernacle were joyned by loops, so are all true Christians by love. 2. *Joy*,] that in special, whereby we rejoyce in our Neighbours good. 3. *Peace*,] the peace of concord with our brethren. 4. *Long-suffering*,] patience drawn out at length, continuing as long as the trouble. 5. *Gentleness*,] amiableness and sweetness in behaviour. 6. *Goodness*,] usefulness in our places. 7. *Faith*,] taken here for fidelity. 8. *Meekness*,] not easily provoked, a readiness to pass by injuries. 9. *Temperance*,] whereby a Christian (as Master in his own house) doth so order his affections, that they do not irregularly move, nor inordinately lash out.

To make us now to mind the way to heaven, consider what lyeth in our Text: the goodly company we shall enjoy in heaven. It was the speech of good old *Grynæus*, Oh happy day! when I shall depart from the crowd and sink in this world, to go to that blessed councel of souls. There is but one heaven to hold all Saints, they shall all be in

O fœlicem diem quum ad illud animorum concilium proficiscar: & ex hac turbâ & colluvione discedam! Grynæus.

one house. Hold up your heads O Christians, we shall be in that heaven where all the godly Patriarchs, Kings, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and Preachers are, and where all our dear friends in the Lord are, who are gone a little before us. Doth it affect you to read the stories of the Patriarchs, the writings of the Prophets and Apostles, the sufferings of the Martyrs; the Acts and Monuments of the Kings, the Sermons of godly Preachers? Oh how will it affect us to see those very persons another day, and to be happy with them.

SERM.

SERM. XVII.

Luke 14. 24.

For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my Supper.

CHAP. I.

THis verse containeth the conclusion of the Parable, the definitive sentence upon the whole. In which we have, 1. A Preface. 2. A Proposition. The Preface is a form of speech usually prefixed to raise our attention unto the weighty matter spoken of. And this very phrase [*I say unto you*] is used near an hundred times by our Saviour in the four Evangelists: The Prophets prefaced their Doctrine with, *Thus saith the Lord.*] But our Saviour prefaceth his Doctrine with, *I say unto you.*] The Prophets were but men, speaking in the name of the Lord, but Christ is God as well as man, and therefore could

ſpeak in his own name, as well as in his father's name, becauſe his father and he are one. Here the conſideration of him that ſpeaks, is ſufficient to make us receive what is ſpoken.

Obſer. The Authority of the ſpeaker is ſufficient ground for the truth, and our belief of the holy Scripture. The Authority of the ſpeaker in ſacred Scripture is altogether divine, it being the word of God, and ſo the Authority of the only Deity.

Queſt. *How doth it appear that thoſe writings (which we call the ſacred Scripture) is the very word of God?*

Reſp. 1. It is evident ſo to be, if ye look at the Penmen of Scripture, and their impartial proceedings in their writings, ſetting down their own commendations, and diſcommendations in expreſs terms, as *Moſes* doth his meekneſs at one time, and his provoking God at another time. Now, as it is a baſe thing for a man to commend himſelf, ſo it is a fooliſh thing for a man to blaze his own faults. It appears therefore the Penmen of Scripture were not led by humane policy, but by divine Authority. And hereby it is evident, they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt

Ghost to set down what they did, 2 *Pet.*1.21. As for that objection which some make from the circumstantial different expressions of the Pen-men, writing the same things as the four Evangelists: we may retort the objection, seeing the difference is not substantial, but circumstantial, and thence fetch a good argument to prove the divine authority of the Scriptures, *viz.* that the Pen-men did not lay their Heads together about the framing of their writings, and did not transcribe one anothers Copies, they agreeing in the main, and yet differing in things of a lesser consideration, which is admirable to consider of.

2. If we look at the matter of these writings, it is evident, it comes from heaven, because it tends to heaven, directing men thither, and taking them off from the world. There is not one tittle of it that savours of earthlyness, or tends to the maintaining of carnal interest; so then as the light of the Sun sheweth it self to be the Sun, as the discourse of a learned man proves himself to be learned; so the language of the Scripture evidenceth it to be sacred, it breathing forth nothing but godliness, thereby it appeareth to be the very breath of God.

3. If we look at the effects of these Scriptures,

ptures, what a wonderful force they have upon the insides of men. *Tertullian* tells the *Jews*, that those places among the *Brittains*, which the *Romans* could never come at, were subdued by Christ, that is, by his word. Here we may appeal to mens consciences for evidence. The awakened conscience of a natural man trembleth at this word. The clear conscience of an holy man feels a through change within made by force of this word. I can speak it by experience, saith *Erasmus*, that there is little good to be gotten by the Gospel, if a man read it cursorily and carelessly, but if he exercise himself therein constantly and conscionably, he shall feel such a force in it, as is not to be found again in any other book whatsoever.

4. If we consider the preservation of these Scriptures. That writings penned by so many several men, at so many several places, in so many several ages, should be kept so entire together, is more than humane power to bring it to pass.

The

The Reason why the Authority of the Speaker is ground enough for our belief of Scripture is,

Because as God is so Almighty, and independent, as none can contribute to his being, so neither to his truth. Let a man but grant a God, and he must needs grant his authority to be authentick, and that absolute credence is to be yielded to him. Hence those Heathen Law-givers, *Numa*, *Lycurgus*, *&c.* would needs seem to derive their Laws from some Deity. And *Mahomet's* dictates may not be disputed upon pain of death, *Let God be true, and every man a Liar*, Rom. 3. 4. and Christ Jesus is truth it self, *John* 14. 6. and God in Christ is that God who cannot lie, *Tit.* 1. 2.

CHAP. II.

Use 1. THis shews us the difference between the holy Scriptures and other writings. No other writing must be believed barely for the Author's sake, but for their agreement to right reason, or to the rule of these holy Scriptures. In other Sciences, we first know, and then believe; but here it is otherwise, we must believe the truth

truth and integrity of the Scriptures, because they are of God; and then we shall know whether these things are of God or not. Humane Authors are apt to go awry in their writings, being biassed by self-interest, and therefore must not presently be credited: as Learned *Scaliger* observeth of *Baronius*, that he did not write, but make Annals.

This also shews us the vanity and vileness of those, who so magnifie reason, as they vilifie faith; who will believe no more than they see reason for; who think it beneath a rational creature to ground faith upon the Authority of the Speaker. Such are the *Socinians*. That which is said to be spoken by a person of Quality of this Nation, of that judgment, is a very prophane speech. What! saith he, do you talk to me of faith; Give me reason, every Cobler may have faith. But the Scripture saith, *Faith is the evidence of things not seen*, Heb. 11. 1. the demonstrative evidence: it is the nature of faith to believe God upon his bare word, and that against sense in things invisible, and against reason in things incredible.

Quid proderit Papismum reliquisse, et in Socinianismum incidisse, cultum imaginum detestari, et cultum imaginationum amplecti? Prideaux.

Sense

Sense corrects imagination, reason corrects sense, but faith corrects both: faith helpeth at a dead lift.

Use 2. Yet this doth not make, that we should take divine truths upon trust, when men utter the same, though they quote Scripture for what they speak; let who will be the preacher, we should examine what we hear, *Act.*17.11. there is a judgment of discretion that belongs to every one to make trial of their own actions.

Secondly, this doth not make Christian Religion irrational: no, it is a most reasonable service, *Rom.*12.1. where we cannot see a natural reason for what we believe, yet it is most reasonable we should believe it, when we know the Supream cause hath spoken it. The knowledge of the Scriptures, and the power of God would make those things credible to faith; which seem impossible to reason, *Matth.*22.29.

Ratio Christianorum est fides. Luther.

Use 3. Let us be ashamed of our slowness to believe what is spoken in the sacred Scriptures. As it is our misery, that we are so dull to conceive, so it is our folly that we are so slow to believe divine truths, *Luke* 24.25.

24. 25. let us be sure throughly to understand those arguments which prove the Authority of sacred Scripture: let us believe God upon his bare word, believing though we have not seen, *John* 20. 29. grounding our faith (according to our duty) upon the Authority of the Speaker. Study the Supremacy of God's Authority. This made the Centurion believe Christ upon his bare word, *Matth.* 8. 8, 9. And be acquainted with those Experiments that assure you that God is as good as his word, Such as that of God's delivering *Israel* out of *Egypt* just at the time appointed, *Exod.* 12. 41. God kept his word to a day.

1. Herein is the high commendation of faith, when we can thus believe God on his bare word. This made Christ say of the Centurion's faith, he had not found so great faith, no not in *Israel*, *Matth.* 8. 10. he admired it, as incomparable and matchless. Some required Christ to come to them; others required Christ to touch them, but the Centurion required no more than this, that Christ should only speak the word.

2. Do ye not trust many a man upon his bare word, whom you look upon as a man of credit? and shall we not much more believe God

God because of his Authority speaking to us, though we see not a reason of such and such things?

3. It is a base affront to the Lord, not to believe him upon his word, herein we carry the matter so, as if his word were not to be taken, as though God were no better than a Liar, 1 *John* 5. 10. Such as these trust God no farther, than they can see cause or reason to yield unto him. How shall we know a Christian from another man, but by adding faith to his reason, and that about the things here below? Those of *China* say, that they only see with two eyes; and the rest of the world but with one: it is most true of real Christians, they only see with two eyes; the eye of reason, and the eye of faith, and the rest of the world with reason only.

4. Consider who Christ is, that thus speaks, *I say unto you.*] He is the *Image of God*, Heb. 1. 3. *The word*, John 1. 1. he *that came out of the bosom of the father*, that *came down from heaven*. I say unto you, you must be thus qualifyed, if ye will be saved.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

That none of those men that were bidden shall taste of my Supper.

FRom the Preface, I come to handle the Proposition, in which there is. 1. The Subject, concerning which something is spoken. *None of those men which were bidden.*] The prædicat, which is spoken concerning that subject: *shall taste of my Supper.*] For the subject: *None of those men* that excused themselves, *verse* 18, 19, 20. The Grandees of the *Jews* ranked under those three sorts, the Honourable, the Wealthy, the Voluptuary. And the Greek word in the Text denotes the prime of men *That were bidden,*] that is, solemnly and earnestly invited, *verse* 16. 17. and yet refused to come, *verse* 18. to partake of that which was provided for them. And so by consequence, no other of the same behaviour, of what rank soever in the world. And if not the greater rank, then not the meaner shall escape unpunished, for the contempt of the Gospel.

Obser.

Observ. God is resolved, that none of those who refuse the Gospel, shall obtain good by the Gospel. Now they that refuse the Gospel, are such, as absolutely and finally do refuse it, who continue in the contempt of it, notwithstanding all means used that they might embrace it. Which refusal of the Gospel may be farther explained.

1. From the example of the *Jews*, pointed at in this Parable, who had the first offer of the Gospel, when Christ came in the flesh. The chief of that Nation, and the generality of that Nation continued in the absolute refusal of the Gospel.

2. In their persecuting Christ unto the death, *Act.* 4. 27, 28. *They denyed the holy One, and the just, and preferred a murderer*, Act. 3. 14. The implacableness of their rage appeared in that dreadful curse they wished upon them and theirs, *Matth.* 27. 25. thirty eight years after this fearful imprecation, in the same place, and close by the same Tribunal, where they cryed out, *His blood be upon us, &c.* Historians tell us, multitudes of them were slain by the sword.

3. In their thrusting the Gospel from them, brought to them by the Apostles after Christ's Resurrection from the dead, *Act.* 13. 46.

4. In their not submitting to be saved by the Righteousness of another: *Jesus* of *Nazareth* will not go down with them; Their ignorance and pride cannot bear it.

This appeareth also from the practice of many living under the Gospel, who continue in the contempt of it.

1. Such as continue grosly ignorant of the mystery of the Gospel, with affected ignorance, having no desire after saving knowledge, like them in *Job* 21. 14. affected ignorance is the Mother of mis-rule and mischief.

2. Such as continue wilfully disobedient to the rule of the Gospel, opposing themselves. The Apostle puts both the ignorant and disobedient together, as the proper fuel for hell fire, 2 *Thes.* 1. 8. their ignorance shall not excuse their disobedience.

CHAP. IV.

GOd's resolution that no such Gospel-refusers shall have any good by it, appareth

1. By the denouncing of his wrath against such in a most dreadful manner, swearing in his

his wrath, not rashly, but advisedly, that they shall never enter into his rest, that will not come under his Government, *Heb.*3.11.

2. By the execution of his wrath against such in a most destructive manner. Severity on the *Jews*, who fell so sadly, that they lie under the wrath of God unto this very day, *Rom.* 11.22. and are not able to recover themselves. Thus much for the discovery of God's resolution herein.

Now I shall shew, that no Gospel-refusers shall receive any good.

1. As for the openly profane: the *Roman* furious souldiers destroyed the Jewish Gospel-contemners, *Matth.* 22. 7. because they resisted the sword of the spirit, the word of God, that it did not enter into their hearts, therefore the sword of the enemy entred into their bowels.

2. As for close hypocrites, God's all-seeing eye will discover them, and his Almighty hand will destroy them, *Matth.* 22.11,12, 13. God puts the hypocrite to a stand, when he questions him, so that he shall not have a word to speak for himself. The high ones that refuse the Gospel, shall not be respected for their greatness; and those that are

low, shall not be pityed for their meanness.

God is thus resolved against these men, because they do what they can to frustrate God's design in sending his Son into the world, *Psal.* 2. 1, 2, 3, 4. Christ came to dissolve the works of the Devil.

CHAP. V.

Use 1. THis informs us, that it is not possible for any one to escape damnation, who neglects salvation, *Heb.* 2. 3. for those who have transgressed the Law, it is possible for them to escape, by having recourse unto the Gospel: but as for those, who refuse the Gospel (the only remedy) how can they escape! A man that will use no means, must needs miscarry. Here also ye may see, that no outward priviledge can exempt a people that is obstinate from divine vengeance. *Jerusalem*, the Vine which God's right hand had planted, must be pluckt up, when it proves unfruitful, and degenerateth.

Use 2. Though God's act of justice run thus generally, yet we must Caution it with a double proviso, in reference to the Jewish Nation against which this was threatned. 1. Provided this extend not so universally

to

to the subject, as to exclude particular *Jews*, that did comply with the Gospel, *Rom.* 11. Though such as had persecuted the Gospel (which was St. *Paul's* case) yet seeing they continued not so to do, but returned to God through Christ, it was well with them. 2. Provided, this doth not extend so perpetually unto time, as for ever to exclude the Jewish Nation from closing with the Gospel; for they shall be called, *Rom.*11.26.

Use 3. Let us improve those examples, which set forth unto us God's vengeance on sinners, and in special on unbelievers. Examples are two-fold, either for *imitation* or *admonition*: the latter is here meant, 1 *Cor.*10. 11.and unbelievers are two-fold, either of *pure negation*, living without the profession and means of faith, as Heathens: or of an *evil disposition*, walking contrary to the Doctrine of the Gospel, as loose Christians. God's judgments on both these sorts of unbelievers must be improved by us, and especially the latter.

1. Yield a firm assent not only to the matter of fact in sad examples, but to the cause of them set down in sacred Scripture, sin deserving, and procuring these judgments, 1 *Cor.*10.6.

2. Bring home those sad examples by a particular application to your selves, so Christ would have us, *Luke* 13. 3. making anothers case our own.

Oh continue not to refuse the Gospel: for this end, let the wicked forsake his way, and return unto the Lord; whether should men go but unto God from whom they fell? let him that is returned, take heed that he back-slide not from the Lord through unbelief. Look well to the exercise of faith, labour to apprehend those promises which God hath given you in his word, and appropriate them that are proper for your present condition, *Heb.*13. 5. The vertue of a plaister appeareth in the application of it to the sore.

CHAP. VI.

Shall tast of my Supper.]

HEre is the matter predicated, or declared concerning the subject fore-mentioned, *Shall tast of my Supper.*] Tasting is taken,

Ravanel.

1. *Properly*: to touch with the lips, and pass judgment upon the diversity

sity of savoury things. There is a dispute among Philosophers, what is the proper *sensorium*, or instrument of tasting. Some say the mouth, others the Tongue, others the palate, others the throat, others the nerves which diffuse themselves through those parts. I suppose, there is a concurrence of all these to a perfect taste.

2. *Figuratively*: and that. 1. *Metonymically* for eating, *Act.* 20. 11. a metonymie of the effect, because we therefore tast, that we may eat. 2. *Metaphorically*: to make tryal, or know by experience: and that, either in a way of sorrow, as to tast death, *Matth.* 16.28. for to suffer death, or in a way of delight. Tasting is put for perceiving in a comfortable manner, *Prov.* 31. 18. this last acception is the meaning of it in our Text, *They shall not tast*,] that is, they shall not by experience know to their comfort, they shall not partake of my Supper. Gospel provision for the good of their souls; but shall know by sad experience what it is to contemn such mercy; they shall for ever despair of the enjoyment of any good. Hence observe,

Intermitatur Deus summum malum. Experimento cognoscent quantum malum sit jacturam fecisse, &c. Salmer.

Observ. That there is not any true experimental, any sanctifying and saving good belongs to them that refuse the Gospel. Such as these are excluded from the communion and fruition, both of the grace and glory of God in Christ.

I. They are excluded from the fruition of the grace of God in this life. They have not a taft of it as is thus evident.

1. They have no sound knowledge, or spiritual discerning of divine truth. They call evil good, and good evil: put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, *Isa.* 5. 20. no taste and relish of the spiritual nature of things. Truth is the meat of the mind, the nourishment of the understanding; but divine truth suiteth not with a carnal mind; the palats of many are out of taste in a spiritual sense: it is too apparent by the multitude of unsound opinions that go down without distelish.

2. They have no firm faith upon God in Christ; *They believe not the record that God gave of his Son,* 1 John 5. 10. God hath put eternal life in his sons keeping, and men will not come to him that they may have life, *John* 5. 40. thereby it appeareth, they are void of faith in God: now faith is the souls taster, to suck the sweetness of the promises.

3. They

3. They have no content or satisfaction in any thing that good is. Tasting is receiving that which is edible or potable, with some kind of pleasure, or liking. Thus wicked men do not taste of Gospel-provision; they have no love or liking of it. The carnal heart is not affected or pleased with spiritual good: *He receiveth not the things of the spirit into him*, so as to receive any satisfaction to his mind in them, 1 *Cor.*2. 14. *they are foolishness to him*, insipid stuff, albeit the wisdom of God. This shews their mouths to be out of taste.

4. They have no meditation on God and his word. They chew not the promises, nor turn them into fatness, they feed not upon such dainties. There is a taste in words: the Heathens had this notion, they saw some could not taste of words as others could. Natural men taste not God's word by any delightful meditation in it.

5. They have no hungring and thirsting after righteousness: carnal hearts look upon themselves so full as wanting nothing, *Rev.*3. 17. Such hearts are like those stomachs that are full of wind, and not of meat, swell'd and puft up. They do not faint for God, nor are they troubled for the want of the spiritual food. They have no spiritual desires, nor endeavours after grace.

II. They

II. They are excluded from the fruition of the glory of God in the life to come: That is the second course of this Gospel-feast; and there also they shall not have so much as a taste. The rich Epicure in the Parable, *Luke* 16. could not have one drop to quench his thirst, or cool his heat, *ver.* 24. no refreshment among the damned. The day of judgment, which is called the times of refreshment to all true penitents, *Act.* 3. 19. will be a day of the encrease of torment to all impenitent creatures.

CHAP. VII.

Use 1. THis informs us of the Righteousness of God in the judgment he inflicts on men. What more righteous than this, that those should have nothing but the terrour and torment of the Law, who would have none of the grace nor duty of the Gospel?

Here also ye may see the vast difference between the godly and the wicked: the wicked shall receive no good, but the godly shall want no good, *Psal.* 84. 11. They having an interest in God himself, must needs possess all in possessing him.

Use

Use 2. Yet there be some natural men, that seem to partake of spiritual good in a large measure, *Heb.*6.4,5 6,7. a great deal for cast-aways to partake of. 1. *They may be illightened* with some divine understanding: divine light may shine into their heads, though not into their hearts; they may have much of the gifts, but nothing of the grace of spiritual knowledge. 2. They may *taste of the heavenly gift*: the common gifts and influence of the spirit, given to profit others withall in the way to heaven, with which gifts they may be instrumental to the bringing of others unto heaven. 3. They may *be made partakers of the Holy Ghost*: as the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost in working of miracles, as those cast-aways make it their plea, *Matth.* 7. 22. 4. They may *taste the good word of God*, by feeling some sudden flashes of joy and terrour under the word, as *Herod* and *Felix* did, and yet not nourished by it, nor satisfied with it. 5. They may *taste of the powers of the world to come*: be taken up with the admiration and contemplation of the Saints happiness in heaven. Thus *Balaam* desired by all means to die the death of the Righteous.

Use 3. Let not us be like the refusers of the Gospel, who shall not taste of Gospel-provision: But

1. Let

1. Let us *taste and see that the Lord is good*, Psal. 34. 8. Oh taste now, lest God in anger for your contempt should say, ye shall never taste of my Supper. Meditate on his word, and apply the promises therein contained: *how sweet are thy words to my taste*! saith *David*, Psal. 119. 103. We should fix our thoughts upon Gods word. Meditation is not a transient, but a permanent act of the soul, abiding where it fastens. Meditation holds reason and faith to their work, and blows the fire till it throughly burn; a man must continue walking, to get himself warm; a few slight thoughts will not warm our hearts in God's service; no, that is the work of most intent meditation.—Let us also reflect upon our souls in a way of Christian experience. We taste God's goodness in experimental and actual discoveries of his gracious working. Oh how delightfully do Saints sit under this shadow, and how sweet is this fruit unto their taste! *Cant.* 2. 3.

2. Live as those that have tasted that the Lord is gracious, 1 *Pet.* 2. 3. by frequent tasting you will be more and more in love with this kind of Liquor. Long for the perfection of grace in the fruition of glory, and for that heaven upon earth, the clear knowledge of your eternal good condition. That glimpse

glimpse you have of heaven, should make you long for the beatifical Vision, and your foretaste for the full draught. *Alexander* the Great sailing in a boisterous sea, discovered before the rest of his company the happy land of *Arabia* by the smell of those sweet odours which the wind conveyed to him! Whereupon he and his company took heart, perceiving they had not far to go. Consider, grace is as a smell of heaven before-hand: Let your present scent set you a longing for all the sweet in heaven. Let this fruit of the Tree of Life make you the more in love with heaven.

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